Es la tristeza que me llama,
y yo me dejo llevar, igual que el río,
cuyas aguas densas y oscuras
resbalan como sangre por mi rostro
desnudo, pálido..., perdido.

Ha zarpado un barco a algún sitio,
surca despacio la noche, y ríe.
Mis ojos se nublan,
sin hacer caso al silencio.
Mi risa se esconde,
la nostalgia está en el viento.

Ya no quiero llorar más...
Me da miedo que las lágrimas arrasen mis sueños,
que los hagan naufragar en el presente
y un día sólo queden sus sombras, perdidas en el tiempo.

Pero aún así volverá el gris de la mañana,
el pozo, en pie, siempre habrá estado allí,
veremos la tierra surgir de la nada,
y tus ojos, quien seas, brillarán para mí.

INNER ESSENCE

THE MIRROR OF MY LONGINGS

"...My fragile dreams would be broken for you"

(D. Cavanagh)

ARS METALLI

"Contradiction is the motor of life; the desire to eradicate it, is the desire for death."

Alain de Benoist

MENHIR
"Buchonia"
ARS CD 005

A trip through our ancestor's history!
MENHIR know how to enchant their listeners with their new songs being pround, powerful and charming at the same time.

Kat.Nr.: RTD 303 51 05.2

ARCANE SUN
"Arcane Sun"
ARS CD 006

Irland's sons are ready to enter yet unknown dimensions.
The banner of metal is the banner of ARCANE SUN.
Monstrous, powerful, breathtaking...
...and still undescribable.

Kat.Nr.: RTD 303 51 06.2

ROUGH TRADE

ARS METALLI
Rosengasse 3 <> 15230 Frankfurt/Oder
Tel: 0335 - 324154 <> Fax: 0335 - 325141
GERMANY

EDITOR'S CORNER

Well, I know that some of you don't pay much attention to editorials but let me say that editorials are formal channels of presentation between the creator and the consumer. A 'zine with no foreword would be somehow a garden with no bloom,...

Welcome to Inner Essence: The mirror of my longings. Once there was a 'zine called Exstinctio Sensus which was buried by time (and dust). After two years of "journalistic" (What?) abscence, a new baby was born and baptised as Inner Essence. My new concept demanded some changes. Inner Essence is more an union of analysis and touches of humour. It's definitely a more consistent formula. The final result has turned out far more varied and interesting than in the past.

Instead of usual logos, every interview or article starts with a headline. Its purpose is (more or less) giving you a picture, flash or whatever of the band, label,... I'm referring to. In other words: It sums up a certain part of one's philosophy. Besides, 90% of the interviews are more elaborated [(a pretty good percentage, indeed)]. They've got much more substance, if you understand what I mean. In fact, I've tried to practise a more independent style when doing interviews. It seems that some questions became "offensive" in specific cases. Some people don't accept others thinking with their own brains. Go on living in your perfect little world. By the way, I intended to include chats with Landberk, Kari, This Empty Flow, Arcturus,... but there was nothing concrete. Let's wait for upcoming editions.

As you've already noticed, Inner Essence is not devoted to any specific musical form. As long as an artist can provide something enjoyable... Why should I care of what kind of music he/she play? Anyway, most of the stuff belongs to the so called "underground" so this means that I.E. still works in subterranean levels, but always looking at the sky.

Yes, someone will crucify me for not including any single review; not my cup of tea. It gets on my nerves to write about all the lousy demos, CDs,... arriving at my mail-box. If I like something, I prefer to prepare some questions.

The process of making Inner Essence has been long and difficult in certain periods (especially when I visited the printer and she told me that the program I used "didn't fit" to be pressed in paper so I had to repeat almost everything, this time using QuarkXPress which fits perfectly now. This corroborated that my relationship with computers was rather naive). If you're working and studying, you'll easily understand that your spare time is ultra limited and you cannot spend the necessary hours. Nothing new for those who are doing the same, right?

Inner Essence is something occasional, so it's impossible for me to say when a new edition shall be available. Anyway, a talented writer would perhaps be a part of Inner Essence and she'd contribute with poems, short stories,... the bits of her works in Spanish I've read are brilliant but I really don't know at this very moment if she's able to do the same in English. Time shall tell.

Last (but not least) I'd like to express my sincere appreciations to: Yoli (por toda tu paciencia), Manolo & Eva (por ser los amigos más especiales que tengo), Vanessa (por tu inestimable ayuda. Ireland Rules!), Markus & Nadine (for being such fantastic persons. See you in Madrid), Jan (for the 7"EP and creating one of my all-time favourite albums), Sid (for being a teacher in matters of the heart), Christoph (for those touching letters), Antonio (El abuelo del Death Metal. Hazme un favor: No cambies nunca. Horns up!), those who answered my silly questions and finally you (I won't lose much money). If you've investigated a little bit deep down after reading Inner Essence, then I've reached my goal.

In Search for The Inner Essence...

EQUIVALENCES

"... I don't care about artistic limitations" (Antichrisis)
Exploring into Mauro's womb (Canaan/Eibon)
"...I feel the word metal a bit limiting" (Crown of Autumn)
Open the ark of your fears (Deinonychus)
O'malley's bar (Descent)
The Devilish decade (Devil Doll)
Sense and Sensibility (Empyrium)
Fucked up by Polish post? (Hefeystos)
Flying through the realm of passion (In The Woods...)
... And the saga continues (Isten)
The man of thousand faces (Karsten Hamre)
Welcome to the world of cosmetics (Lacrimosa/Hallof Sermon)
The Book of Secrets (Loreena McKennitt)
The Arcane and The Profane (Mimes Brunn)
A momentary lapse of meditation (Naervaer)
"I consider myself more a songwriter than a musician..." (Nick Cave)
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When music meets poetry (Paragon of Beauty)
L'art pour L'art (Prophecy)
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Sophistication at its highest (Sup)
Sounds from the forest (Tenhi)
Into the Labyrinth (The Gallery)
A tomb down the lake (Unholy)
Analogue tulips invade your CD-player (Wish)

All questions, presentations, wanderings of the mind,... by Raúl Jiménez; except for Devil Doll (Rossana Pistolatto), Loreena McKennitt (Quinland Road). Front and Backcover courtesy of Markus Stock (words on backcover by Celia). In The Woods... photos by Jose "Bigotes". The rest of photo-credits by anonymous beings. Printed at Xiana (Getafe-Madrid). Dep. Leg.: M-44424-1998 **Inner Essence; Raúl Jiménez; Apartado 1043; 28915 Leganés (Madrid); Spain. E-mail: soporte@ateinco.es INNER ESSENCE HOMEPAGE: http://www.<Ninguno>ateinco.es/inner-essence**

FLYING THROUGH THE REALM OF PASSION

Those close to me know perfectly my unhealthy obsession by In The Woods... "Omnio" second album: My quest for the Inner Essence. It retains certain doses of an intricate world of wishes, dilemmas, anxieties,... To make it short: In The Woods... enforced my fragile structures. "Omnio" represents a step beyond my previous conception of this band. One cannot avoid to go into ecstasies over Jan's oral flair or cello-spotlights or progressive guitars or... It's not very usual to find such intense combination of inherent stamina and melancholic vibrations. If you crave for more wooden symphonies, Jan "Bad Haircut" Transit & Co. presents a new 7"EP including "Child of Universal Tongue", made back in '93 which proves how an "old" song can be redefined, and a cover version of the mighty Pink Floyd. By the way, the third album is waiting for you. Run, Run, Run!!!

Let me start by quoting the following lines (taken from the track "Weeping Willow") which represent perfectly the philosophical concept of "Omnio" album: "If the earth was a willow, and you were one too, would earth be the weeping, so gently so true?, If I was a garden, whereas you could grow, would you hand me your branches, and grant me your love". Can Love and its many faces be pondered on a weighty argument of In The Woods...? Are we definitely ahead a very intimate album?

—"Bob Dylan once quoted: "Love is all there is. It makes the world go around. Love and only Love-it can't be denied". Personally, I can relate very much to that from a philosophical point of view. All other aspects besides Love, occur cause Love doesn't make it or when Love becomes overwhelming. From this point, I find this theme a very obvious one to dwell with. Of course, it's not only about Love between two people. The topic is taken further from a very reasoning side of the road. "Omnio" is for sure our most intimate album to date, even though our next outlet will become far more " to the core". When we compose, we do it on a very honest level, as we feel this is the only way to get down to the innermost, emotional state of mind. If we had done it in another way, we would probably split age ago".

Glancing retrospectively through the band's story... Would you mind to write your conclusions of the distance travelled so far? Has it provided you something important to your earthly existence?

—"Again, I must conclude from a very personal point of view, though I know that Woods... is a milestone for some of the other guys as well. The thing with this band so far have been pure dedication from one end to another. I do think that's a very important aspect to keep a band steady for years. If there's a lack of dedication from more than fifty per cent of the performers it's damn hard to keep the rock rolling. To me, it's very important to be creative. One day without creativity of some sort, feels like a wasted one, and thus you find no other choice than to do something about it. Especially when a wasted day pounds on your brains like a ten ton hammerhead. If I hadn't done this, I guess I would have left rather miserable and poor 24 h. a day. The distance so far? Well, it's kinda hard to conclude with anything at all, as I am very much into reality here and now. I easily forget about the past if it doesn't bother me too much and I feel it's the best possible "solution" for me at the moment. One thing, though, if you wanna be rich and famous, don't go for rock'n'roll and its sub-genres. We're always broke on a band-basis".

Jan: The guy who disturbed the crowd in Barcelona (Spain?) during Autumn Wilderness Tour

Regarding "Isle of Men"... Of course, some things could have been better, but what are the most outstanding points in your first and official demo? How many editions were on cassette (I heard three of them but I'm not sure)? Is the re-press on CD still available?

—"We did three editions of that tape, and pressed quite a few all together. I was satisfied with the tape when it was released in the first place, which means that I still am. Of course, we wouldn't have done the same thing today, but as it felt right at the time, I'm still pleased. The CD edition is probably sold out, as we only did 1000 copies. The main thing was to please a few people that never got hold of the tape-version".

A hard and abstract question... Are you able to put in few lines what life means to you? Have "pleasant" moments tipped the scales?

—"I believe in nothing but changes. A moment of truth one day, may occur as the total opposite the next. I have learned to accept that, which means I'm not as confused as I used to be when changes came in through the backdoor. I believe in nothing but chaos. Order is something visual, not physically or psychically when all is taken to the uttermost zero. My task is to elaborate all dogmas, far I know they are an illusion to what cosmos is about anyway. I may sound like a loonie, bringing these words forth, but I was born into a sick and twisted world. I feel better than ever before I find the moments when I'm totally wrong about something, utmost fascinating".

In an interview of yours ages ago you stated: " I am me, master, but not divine". In addition, you wrote in a song of your second album: "In a way, I perceive myself as my own god, my own master and my own slave...". Should I infer from this as a "logical" individualism beyond the lack of "self-motto" in actual society?

> " I always enyoy my ass off when I'm in Spain (Insane in Spain-hmm... good title for a live-album... I'll keep it for later) "

—"You're definitely getting somewhere... To me there is no society. Only "the visual thing". We choose to call society as mentioned above. There is nature and individualism. I do think we experience totally different worlds-even when glancing over the same area. It all depends on where we come from (speaking of the milieu), besides DNA. I believe in the fact that we are alone and alone only. We have to learn to accept that to move on. This is of course my world and I don't necessarily expect other people to cling to it, simply because it is impossible. I'm only into the idea about things".

> " Well, it's kinda hard to conclude with anything at all, as I'm very much into reality here and now. I easily forget abaut the past if it doesn't bother me too much, and I feel it's the best "solution" for me at the moment "

Your vocals have developed in the most fitting form in "Omnio". Have you taken a music course in order to shape your voice? What's the "secret" for such privileged throat?

—"As I'm the subject, I find it hard to rely on myself concerning a vocal evolution or not. I feel there have been a certain development, but I do find it strange as I've never really rehearsed properly at home, nor in the rehearsal-room. But I believe it has something to do with the evolution on a personal level. Even if I don't rehearse, I "think" vocals rather often. Sometimes, I like to think that a certain development have taken place, simply because I really don't give a fuck. Anyway, thanks heaps for thy compliment."

How do you look on "Heart of the Ages" now afters its release years ago? Which nuances would you point out? Tell us briefly the idea of including Bhagwam Shree Rainneesh's words under each lyric?

—"I'm still very found of the (inner?) essence of that album. I enjoy the duality and diversity of it. It's full of changes- of black and white, and I can very much relate to that even now. I remember I wanted the whole album done with melodious voices, but I'm kinda happy that the other guys talked to me out of it. It's somehow hard to look back on such efforts, because I never really listen to the albums/recordings, except when we are doing studio-time and after the dirt is done. Anyway, I always tend to remember the feeling I had when we were done with the whole process, an I had a good vibe after "Ages" was completed. That means more than the present feel. The weirdest part(s) of each album/recording always become the highlights after some time, and the same goes for that album. The last bit of the title-track and the mid-piece of "Wotan", besides the end of it all, is what I cling to as "memorable" at the present. Bhagwam (Osho) was included because I was very much into him at the time. We picked out some quotes to fit with each lyric, but I cannot remember what it was all about. It was OK at the time, so...".

Most of readers know your boycott in the distribution of your products in France due to their nuclear-tests. I think you should clarify this decision at this point.

—"Rather simplified; We act in a humble way towards the earth. The French government did not at that time (and probably not now either...). When French distributors sold our albums, they had to pay tax to the government. In other words- we didn't want to support with tax-money to the nuclear testing, and thus we decided to call it a day for France. I know it may sound weird, as our contribution was like a drop in the ocean. We did what felt right at the time, and we did it on our own premises and that we would have done the same to this date"

It hasn't been so beneficial (compared with other bands from your country) to be Norwegians (In The Woods... was "accused" of pacifists, hippies,...). Do you really dare of this senseless words? Have you been upset with those who associated In The Woods... and the B.M. movement in the past?

—"We've had a good time concerning the BM-hype in the past years. When we started out, it was a pain in the bottocks to be classified as "cold BM" etc. After a while, we didn't care and still don't. The major thing is to do what we feel is right at any point. As long as we do, we'll heep the wagon rolling— Yeah, we've been accused" (Wow! Scary??!!) of pacifists, something we are for sure. We cannot be hippies, as the hippie thing died out in '67 (from an ideologist point of view, that is). People may call us whatever. Maybe we should start a competition for the best ideas?".

A Grace Slick's cover was included on your "White Rabbit" 7"EP. Why? Have you heard the different versions of the same songs that other bands... ? Do you believe yours is the best?

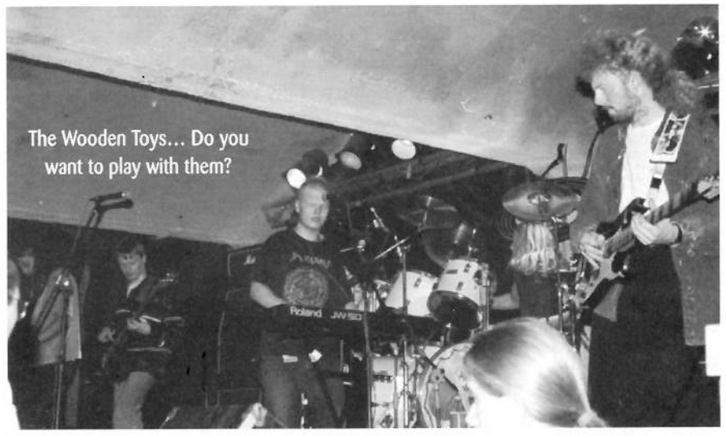
—"Eh, we don't think our "Rabbit" version is the most outstanding. Actually, it's the worst and most crappy version EVER... he he... Seriously, I don't know. Never really thought about it that way... We were into (are into?)—especially Oddvar after midnight and ye host— the period for quite some time, and the story behind that whole "White Rabbit" thing is rather fascinating. We decided to do that song because we got a major kick out of it, and still do. The original version kicks some serious ass, you know! Also the live-cut from Woodstock is highly memorable".

I had the chance to witness a date of Autumn Wilderness Tour. In The Woods... acted quite natural, with no forced attitude (I cannot say the same for Voices of Destruction and Katatonia). What's your overall impression of those weeks?... And Spain (just curiosity)?

—"We had a good time on that tour. Came along quite well with V.O.D. and a little with Katatonia too. Everything was usually rather laid-back and the journey was easy going. Personally, I'm very found of travelling, and I found it amusing to get out of bed in a new place everyday-eating breakfast at different taverns and doing the espresso-tests all over the place. Perfect, if you get a kick out of changes. I had been to Spain quite a few times before we played in Barcelona, and your country amuse more and more. I'm very much into Barcelona especially speaking of "La Sagrada Familia" and the park Gaudi did as well. Some of the general architecture is outstanding. Your language is my fave one, and I'm about to study right now— cannot wait any longer, he he... I always enjoy my ass off when I'm in Spain (Insane in Spain- Hmmm,... good title for a live-album... I'll keep it for later...). I can especially find nice/not nice sites in the countryside and along the coast— in other words, very appealing. Also the gig in Barna was nice to do. Very nice spinnach-lassagna they served at the Garatge! Portugal is great too. A pity we didn't get the chance to go all the way...".

A German guy told me about an I.T.W. gig in front of a forest. He used these words: "... Summertime, the sun sets, the moon rises, you see the silhouettes of the trees and that In The Woods... "Over the mountaiiiiins... "That's cut my throat, whenever I see it!". What does such event pass on you? And compared with concerts in conventional halls?

—"I remember the gig your friend's referring. We had a really enjoyable time there, as well and I guess we were pretty wasted before we kicked off, heh... Gives you a good vibe when you hear that people really got into what you were doing.



The Wooden Toys... Do you want to play with them?

"I believe in nothing but changes. A moment of truth one day, may occur as the total opposite the next. I have learned to accept that, which means I'm not as confused as I used to be when the changes came in through the backdoor."

When I go to gigs, I'm usually dissatisfied, so I know we are doing a descent thing up there when people are having a good time enjoying themselves. That's why we go to gigs, isn't it? To be entertained... In general, I pretty much prefer to do open-air gigs. Gives you a groovier kind of freedom not to be pushed into a venue with dry air-conditioning. A lot of energy gets lost, in a way-it's kinda hard to describe. Playing live should be a positive experience from the darker side of things".

In which countries outside Europe would you like to play? Have you been offered a live-appearance in an "exotic" place?

—"I would love to play in Russia, Brazil and China especially, but I guess we'll have to sell out as rock-stars for a cheap price to achieve that, he he... The most "exotic" place we've been offered so far have been Turkey. I'm really happy into going, but the present situation is a bit kinky, if you what I mean... We are currently working on a new album, and it's easier for us to concentrate on one thing at the time".

You worked once on a zine called "1000 years of...". It laid on ice, but if you'd decide to do a new issue... What would be the general concept? What kind of interviews, articles,... would you include?

—"Well, I don't think I would have had a main concept going, but more like different articles on philosophy, literature and some music in between. Maybe a section of rare points of view on different subjects would've been nice as well. And let's not forget the poetry: Pages and pages of poetry pouring like a grey river".

"Omnio" CD-cover differs from LP version. What both pics. are supposed to be?

—"It all depends on what you want it to be, I guess. What do you think it's supposed to be, Raúl?" (Well, CD-cover looks like Mars surface or something like that. LP cover????... Your face right after leaving the operating theatre!!!)

Jailhouse is becoming the regular studio for In The Woods... —Which are the conditions for the recordings there? Did you have the same time-pressure than most of other bands?

—"At Jailhouse the conditions are OK, as it's pretty cheap there— which means that there's usually no time-pressure at all. It's more like chilling out in your own living room. As we get along fine with the guys up there, we find it a natural choice-especially for more proper recordings".

"Omnio" is the title for the second album and also for the last song (which is splitted into three factions). We can find it in passages: "... blurred were my eyelines, hindering... to touch Omnio" or "... carved out of velvet, draped in truth to reach Omnio". Is it a kind of higher dimension? Reveal us the hidden message behind Omnio, please.

—"Omni is the Latin word for "all". More or less like a balanced state of mind, the way we have used it. "Omnio" is a developed form of "Omni", but the first mention has a better and easier touch to it. A state of "Omnio" is very personal, and this was my version at the time we recorded that album".

I think that the lyrics are a bit different now. Adjectives like heartfelt, deep, sensitive,... fit without any major problem when I'm reading... Would you agree with me if I say they are a mirror of your most inner feelings, dreams,...?

—"The words we've been working with for our 3rd outlet, are even more different from "Omnio" than "Omnio" was from "Ages". Has to do with this evolution I mentioned a few lines ago. We like to change. We like every album/release to have a certain personality. Each and everyone of them should differ from the rest-that's the main thing for us. It has to be a natural progression as well. If nothing new comes up in a natural way, we usually wait until it does. When you try and force on a certain mood, it usually turns out to become a parody of yourself or someone else. A steady, natural progression is nice to work with, because innovation lurks around the corner when you tend to take things a step or two further. Hmmm... Yeah, words usually mirror parts of yourself, but I think it's all useless if you don't undress a hundred or ten per cent. I don't want a veil to embrace what we compose, but I want it to be pure as purity itself. Only then-form my point of view- you'll be able to touch parts you never knew existed".

"I believe in nothing but chaos. Order is something visual, not physically when all is taken to the uttermost zero. My task is to elaborate all dogmas, for I know they are an illusion to what cosmos is abaut anyway"

I must confess that it was a nice surprise the first time I heard "Omnio". In The Woods... explores new grounds and lead to the listeners into fresh and different fragrances. How would you describe this evident development?

"Omnio is a developed form of "Omni", but the first mention has a better and easier touch to it. A state of "Omnio" is very personal, and this one was my version at the time we recorder that album".

—"Guess I've explained most of what you're aiming at here, so I will rather tell you about my new friend, Thorbjorn. He's from Mongolia and has a fluffy tail two times the length of his body. He's a smart ass as well, so it's impossible to catch him. Anyway, he seems to enjoy his freedom, so I won't put him back into his prison-cage. Did you get it so far?"

Your session vocalist takes an important role in "Omnio" (even "Kairos!" is entirely sung by her). Do you want to incorporate a certain degree of feminine sensibility?

—"First off, Synne Soprana is-like the rest of us— a permanent member of Woods... She came in when I was in the middle of an "identity-crisis" concerning my voice (half a year after "Ages", or so). We were searching for another vocalist to fill in the gaps. Didn't know whether we were looking for a male or female voice, but she turned up and there you go. I do think it works fine now, and I really hope we have something good going for the 3rd one...".

You've recorded a 7"EP to follow up last years "White Rabbit"-EP. This would be the second of the three presented in a 7"EP Box-Set in the end. Give us some hints...

—"The second 7" in the series of 3-7" is already released (June'98). It holds two songs-the 1st being the 3rd version of "Child of Universal Tongue" and the other side being a cover-version of Floyd's "Let there be more light". It's kinda difficult to label the two, so I'll leave up to the listener(s). The 3rd 7" (with the box) will be released during '99 some time, and it will hold two more tracks (including a cover version of a '69-release)".

Is In The Woods... Website accessible now? Which contents are available?

—"A Dutch guy calling himself "The Wanderer" is constantly working on a home-page. I don't remember the address, but I'm sure it's possible to find it combing both "In The Woods"+"Wanderer" or so. Address revealed on next release, I hope".

Feel free to express something in closing words shaped. Thanks for everything and keep up the great work, Jan!

—"First, I'd like to thank you Raúl for all the patience and understanding you have proven + the intie itself. Very enjoyable and balanced! Thanks a lot man! Might be interesting to know that we'll do studio-time for the next album this August. Hopefully, we'll have it released in Januar'99. Misanthropy is still taking care of the practical side of things. The third full-length will hold ten new songs and it's for certain a step further form anything we've done before. Also, it should be possible to get the web-page address from Misanthropy. They will gladly take care of anything for you... They've also started a new service now: Fellatio for anyone that buy ten products of different releases from their catalogue. If you think they're asking for much, it's just because Ved Buens Ende needs a new drum-kit. Cherio, folks! See you long in the banks of Pandemonium... Jan Transit/I.T.W.".

ANTICHRISIS: " ... I DON'T CARE ABOUT ARTISTIC LIMITATIONS!"

Are you looking for new experiences? Do you need something different? Antichrisis could be the perfect answer... I had the opportunity to get "Cantara Anachoreta" (thanks to the promotional "campaign" of Ars Metali) and I'd add that it was a really nice surprise. You won't find for sure the stagnated material which is mostly circulating out there. Moonshadow (the man responsible of Antichrisis) has created 70 minutes of great and varied melodies turning out more than interesting. Well, a couple of crucial events happened right after the first part of this interview which ended up with the release of "A legacy of love": Uriah Heep meets The Coors!!! Just listen tracks like "Our last show", "Forever I ride" or "Baleias Dancando". I can't do nothing but raising my glass in honour to Sid, one of the most peculiar personalities I've ever met and one of the most talented musicians on the face of planet earth. But he's not alone in this "Legacy of Love"; Lisa's taking care of angelic voices while Näx is playing instruments like uilleán pipes, bodhrán, keyboards, guitars, mandoline, tin whistle. Mix it with Sid's capacities and you'll obtain something "faraway from your average Gothic Metal-stereotype". For lovers of formal informative lines, "A.L.O.L" is released via Black Rose Productions (a division of Napalm Records) and also a maxi-CD containing "End of December" (not included on the album due to restrictions of running-time of CDs). Unfortunately, there won't be any vinyl releases at all. Questions regarding "Cantara Anachoreta" were answered by Moonshadow. Those of "A Legacy of Love" by Sid, instead of Moonshadow "who died under strange circumstances in winter '97". The most tragic loss after Euronymous' murder.

Hi Moonshadow! First question doesn't deal strictly with Antichrisis, but... As far as I know, you were born in 1962. It's not very usual to find people of the same age who are really involved into this music "scene" (I mean: most of them settle down, have a regular family or just "forget" the stuff they once liked). Do you consider music more than a temporary hobby? Is it important part of your life?

—"Oh yes, music is one of the most essential gifts in my life. It's like a prayer to me, a divine gift of the Goddess allowing me to express my feelings, visions and dreams that would otherwise be unutterable... Music is most definitely more than just a hobby to me: It's the rhythm of my life, and I am the dancer between the worlds! I don't think that music is a matter of age: It just depends on how devoted you are! If it's just a passtime, then you'll lay your guitar down as soon as you have settle down and other things become more important. But if you are a passionate musician, then nothing will stop you from revealing your soul through melodies, harmonies and rhythms.

Of course my musical tastes has changed all through these years: Although I still listen to that old school of '77 Brit-Punk (Those were days, sigh!), I m nowadays also listening to classical stuff, Irish Folk, Country & Western and Reggae(just to name a few)... As long as it is a "good" song, I don't give a damn about any musical styles or "metallic" political correctness!

Besides, it would be interesting for readers to know who is Moonshadow apart of activities related to the band.

—"Eh... Where to start? OK: I'm a winter-born Capricorn (also of Capricorn ascendant), a singer, guitarist, songwriter and a follower of the Goddess. I am trying to make my visions and dreams come true, trying not to harm anyone; and I believe in love as a sacred power that allows us to become Goddesses and Gods, to cross the threshold of paradise... Maybe I'm just one of the remaining hippies (although I'm black-clothed and short-haired just like Johnny Cash!) because I still think that love, peace and understanding (Hello to Nick Lowe!) aren't such a bad idea...

Before Antichrisis, you used to play to play in numerous bands (to name only a few: Temple of Loki, Assorted State of Decay, La Strada...). Could you write in some lines the positive/negative aspects of having played in those groups?

—"The aforementioned groups weren't proper bands, but mere solo-projects of mine; each of them released one or two demos before vanishing into oblivion or being transformed into something completely different (Hello to Johnny Cleese)... There have only been two "real" bands ("The Frust" (awe-inspiring pre-industrial noise-cascade that made your brain drool... and made the audience throw rotting vegetables (Hello to Jello Biafra) at us; and "Cinnamoon" (First attempt of combining Folk-Rock with metal-edged music involving a really brilliant drummer, an over-enthusiastic bass-player always trying to convince us of doing a cover-version of "Take Five" (definitely no hello to Al Jarreau) and a pain-in-the-arse-like solo-guitarist who never appeared at rehearsals but nevertheless thought of himself as being a bloody genius (which he wasn't despite of the fact that he played an expensive Rickenbakker)!):Surprisingly enough both lasted longer than your average three months, but I soon realised that I'm too much to pig-headed for fitting into a band: music and democratic decisions don't seem to go together very well! Many musicians try to concentrate on just one particular style(Hello to The Ramones(=gods!!!)), whereas I've always interested in exceeding musical boundaries: Especially Heavy Metal musicians are worse- no chance of getting a heart-touching C&W-ballad properly intonated with those high-speed-head-banging-buggers...

It's also remarkable that you were buskin in England and Ireland... Comment the most outstanding experiences in those countries, please.

—"The most impressive encounters in those countries had nothing to do with buskin at all, although buskin is a wonderful way to know a country and its people... The most remarkable event of my "Irish Tour" was being up on Slieve League, which is Europe's highest cliff-top: A place of pure magic with the ravishing beauty of its wild and breathtaking scenery and with the debris of forsaken hermitages scattered all around-I never felt so close to both heaven and sea... My favourite site of England still is the Cornish coast path: It's a heck of a travel to walk this way (Hello to Aerosmith!), but as it leads you to such bewitching places as Boscastle, Tintagel or St. Michaels Mount, it compensates for all the strains and awful sunburns!"

Antichrisis is your medium for expressing dreams, wishes, ... Can Antichrisis be considered as an individualistic plan? Would you include permanent members with total freedom to create?

—"The engagement of a permanent new member has already taken place: Alex, who is a brilliant Irish Folk Musician playing Uileann Pipes (=Irish Bagpipes), Bodhran, Violin, Mandoline, Futle and Tin whistle, has joined Antichrisis, and working with him is just flabbergastingly outrageous! Of course Antichrisis can still be considered as a solo-project of mine, as I'm still responsible for the songs: The main function of this outfit is still to be a mirror of my dreams and emotions; but nevertheless- if Alex would come up with songs of his own that'd fit into the concept of Antichrisis... Why not? Let's wait and see..."

You have merged elements of Celtic Folklore, Sacral Medieval Music, Gothic Rock and Doom. Any special reason for this kind of mixture? What do you want to transmit to the listeners?

—"The only reason for a large variety of different musical styles in Antichrisis is that I don't care about artistic limitations! Inspiration comes in any shape it likes, and it'd be a crime trying to restrict it to just one kind of musical expressiveness- If a song comes to me as a folk ballad, I'll translate it exactly that way into music; if it comes to me as a piece of gloomy doom metal, I'll have to let it happen that way! Musical limitation means standstill, and that means death to an artist's creativity! Therefore I'm glad that Alex's contribution to Antichrisis allows me to enlarge my musical eloquence, as both of them add completely different colours to the multi-layered painting that Antichrisis is meant to be... Don't get me wrong: I'm not using different styles just for his own sake... Let's put it this way: Someone who only writes "typical" BM-songs seems to me like a painter who only uses only one colour for his pictures... undoubtedly this kind of technique has its points, but if you intend to portrait life itself or the human soul in all its myriad of facets, you'll have to use all the colours of your palette! This explains exactly what I want to transmit to the listener: The heart and soul of Moonshadow, my emotions with all their shades- nothing more and nothing less! Antichrisis can only be categorised by emotional values, not by any assignments of musical styles!"

"Antichrisis can only be categorised by emotional values, not by any assignments of musical styles".

Demo debut "Missa Depositum Custodi" was released in August 1995; Let us know something concerning the tape (songs included, copies printed...). Still available? Have you thought to re-release it on CD/LP? (Quite often these days)

—"There has been an edition of 500 copies of the demo "Missa Depositum Custodi", and it has been sold-out within 6 months after its release. There hasn't been a 2nd edition, because as the got me a record- contract, it had fulfilled its purpose and is now simply a collector's item. It wouldn't make any sense to re-release the demo on CD, as 5 of 8 songs of "Missa Depositum Custodi" found their way to "Cantara Anachoreta" in re-arranged and largely altered versions, hence the partially different titles on the CD. The songs on "Misa Depositum Custodi" were: "Burial" ("Prologue" on "C.A."), "Whales" ("Baleias" on "C.A."), "Requiem" ("Requiem ex Sidhé" on "C.A."), "Beautiful Wolves" (not on "C.A."), "Dark Consolation" (not on "C.A."), "Goodbye to Jane" (same on "C.A.") and "Gleann-cholmkille" (not on "C.A."). As aforesaid, the songs on "Missa Depositum Custodi" appearing again on "Cantara Anachoreta" have been revised that much that the album can definitely not be seen as a re-recording of the demo, but a completely unique work of its own!"

Let's go on with Antichrisis' "Cantara Anachoreta": This debut CD has been released by Ars Metalli. Why did you decide to sign a contract with them? Have bigger labels showed interest recently?

—"There have been 3 considerable offers after the release of "Missa Depositum Custodi", and the one of Ars Metalli was despite of being by just another independent underground label simply the best concerning artistic and financial matters. Despite of all these business connections, Christoph (head of Ars Metalli) really believed in Antichrisis from the beginning, I never had the feeling that he's only interested in the commercial aspects- much more than that he is dedicated to the music itself as I could wish for! He works his arse off to promote Antichrisis as good as possible (and that goes for every other Ars Metalli act as well!), he does everything he can and much more, and at least he's the most reliable, dedicated, honest, sincere and hard-working business-man I've ever met. After all, as Christoph and me met each other during the preparations for Under Black Clouds' 2nd CD, we've soon become friends, for we seem to have a few things in common... There have been also 3 appreciable offers by bigger labels after the release of "Cantara Anachoreta", but the forthcoming CD will be done with Ars Metalli anyway... and then we'll see what happens next!"

"Someone who only writes "typical" BM -songs seems to me like a painter who only uses one colour of his pictures... undoubteldly this kind of technique has its points, but if you intend to portrait life itself or the human soul in all its myriads or facets, you'll have to use all the colours of your palette!"

The concept of album is based in the life of Ariman (the hermit) who is aware that his time has come. Then recollects occurrences of his present and past life before death embraces him. Is each track of the occurrences mentioned? Tell us something about "The endless dance".

—"You're right: Every track represents an episode of Ariman's past or present life(s), except "Prologue" and "Epilogue": These sound-scapes (as they are not songs in the literal meaning of the word) are creating the scope to the plot. "Prologue" reflects Airman's frame of mind as he separates himself for the dark journey; it does this not by words (as only "As darkness falls" is repeated again and again), but the melancholy mood that the melody of this piece of music creates... But you've asked me about "The endless dance": As Ariman falls into semi-consciousness, he encounters events of an earlier incarnation, when he was friend with the witches of his vicinity and was allowed to their feasts and festival where he joined their dances and fell in love with the coven's youngest sister! This happened during the middle ages, when christendom spread its inquisitorial claws across the land and the wise women were hunted and persecuted! Therefore Jehovah, the christian demiurge, summons the hounds of the lord (lat. "domini canes", also title of the monastic order of the dominicans) to pursue the witches and their fellowship, and though it seems that their bloody-thirsty atrocities could exterminate the pagan lore, they are going to loose in the end, because the Lady of the witches, the Goddess of the Night her angels, conquers the breed of hate and intolerance, and Jehovah is doomed to oblivion, whereas the witches' dance will go on in eternity! It's a very metaphorical song, according to its lyrics, combines doom metal, black metal, Celtic Folk and opera-like-vocal arrangements...

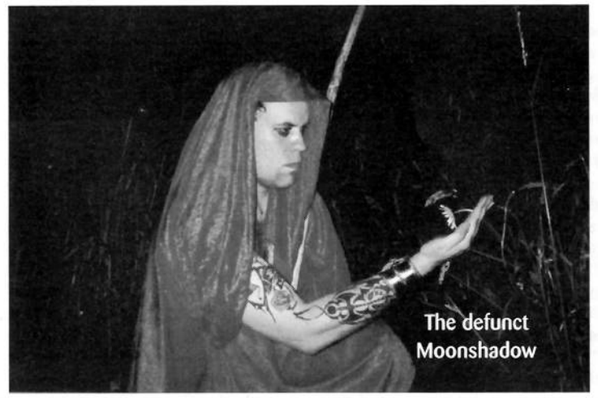
"Requiem ex Sidhé" speaks of the distress of loosing the one he once loved and the name of Eva appears (your once whom the first CD is dedicated to). Apparently these lines reflect your own distress, am I correct?

—"Of course the story told on "Cantara Anachoreta" is an allegory of my own life, and Ariman can be seen an "alter ego" of mine. I encountered the anchorite in many dreams, where he revealed his story to me; nevertheless I cannot tell if he's an entity of his own or an embodiment of a former incarnation of mine... dreams never bother with insignificant details like that! But returning to "Requiem ex Sidhé": Ariman once loved-remember the youngest sister of "The endless dance" - but he lost his inamorata, and although this song stays vague by not telling how this love was lost, it is nevertheless a bitter and mournful lament, an aural monument for the one he once beloved. It is also my tribute to Eva: We spent almost 7 years together, and I'll always remember our time as something beautiful and estimable. Though my life has changed a lot since that, and though there's no grief or sadness left anymore, there are still memories- and they are treasured in my heart forever: You'll never forget the ones you really loved! At the time when "Cantara Anachoreta" was recorded, Eva and me were still together, but our parting was inexorably emerging... never before has one of my songs sounded as desperate and passionate as "Requiem ex Sidhé"...

"Goodbye to Jane" deals with a girl who commits suicide after being abused by her father. I don't see any connection between this lyric and the rest, so if you don't mind, explain the grounds of this theme. Is it based in a real event?

—"Unfortunately "Goodbye to Jane" is based on that kind of real events that one can read about every day in the newspapers! It makes me sick to see all the male violence against women- I think that men committing crimes like rape are definitely emotional deranged yet nevertheless menacing madmen who should be locked away forever! I do think that the story behind "Goodbye to Jane" shows a typical outgrowth of our patriarchal system that denies female values and oppresses women thoroughly. As Marilyn French put it: There's an unnoticed war going on, a war against women! Our western culture has lost respect for womanhood: Pornography, prostitution, sexual harrassments etc... seem to be quite common today, although all these occurrences do indicate that this society is completely out of balance, that we continually disavow our roots (i.e. respect for women, as each and everyone of us got birth by one!),

and Jane is just another victim of a progress where even children aren't safe anymore! As aforesaid, daily papers are full of incidents like that, see f.e. last year's events in Belgium (Dutroux-Affair): How sick, sadistic and callous does one have to be to treat defenceless and innocent humans beings like that? Maybe I had to write a song like "Goodbye to Jane" to do at least some kind of justice to the victims, although my words surely can't describe the terror, the pain, the fear and the hate that a girl like Jane must have experienced and suffered from! "Goodbye to Jane" ends with the girl's suicide-although I wish that it'd be the other way round, the victims of male violence don't often have a chance to survive: Either they get killed, or they are suffering for the rest of their lives! Praying to a patriarchal god (like Jane does) isn't any help-just read the "Book of Judges" or the "Book of Kings" (of the so-called "Holy Bible") and you'll realise how this Jehovah-bloke appreciates violence against women (remember Jezebel?). Women do have to empower themselves to break free from their chains... even if it means to beat out the shit of any male assailant! Anyway: a child like Jane is defenceless, hence we (i.e. everyone of us) have to protect her! Ariman encounters Jane's restless spirit on threshold between life and death, were Jane's ghost still calls for revenge!"



What about "Baleias" and "Her Orphaned Throne"? Why have you used Latin in the middle of "Her Orphaned Throne"?

—"Baleias" deals with the phenomenon of losing your way from time to time, and it needs one brief moment of contemplation or an unexpected stroke of fate to realise what's gone wrong: a situation that happens to many human beings throughout their lives, even to a sage like Ariman... It's an optimistic and powerful song. Even if you think you might be too old or too saturated for a change, Goddess snips her fingers and -"bang"- all of a sudden everything simply isn't the same anymore. She changes everything she touches, and everything she touches is changed... "Her Orphaned Throne" is about those changes in life that seem to be more than flesh and blood can stand at the first time... all your plans have failed, your expectations went down the drain, all your dreams vanished and you're so desperate and forlorn that you don't believe in anything-not even yourself- anymore: That's apostasy for you! A well-known human experience, also familiar to Ariman- but while going through this maze of doubt and distress, he gained strength and realised that every failure fulfilled a certain purpose that he wasn't able to detect because of being entangled too much on his own obstinacy. Being rebounded and disillusioned, Ariman thinks that the Goddess has left him, but in fact she was always by his side to enable him to prosper and grow... "Will she ever come again?"... Well, she was never away! I used Latin in the mid-part of this song because I just love the sound of this language- it always add a special touch of solemnity and magic!"

"It makes me sick to see all the male violence against women-I think that men committing crimes like rape are definitely emotional deranged yet nevertheless menancing madmen who should locked away forever!
... Our western culture has lost respect for womanhood: Pornography, prostitution, sexual harrasments etc... seem to be quite common today, although all these occurences do indicate that this society is completely out of balance..."

"Descending Messiah": His dreams for the return of the Goddess. A return that will bring the end to injustice, intolerance and the lies of the false prophets, and the golden age will dawn again. Can people interpret the Goddess as the personification of a superior being (capable to transform the unavoidable)?

—"Not "superior" in the hoity-toity way of this Jehovah-lad, but in a way a loving mother is to her children! Monotheistic gods are mighty keen on obedience, virtue and piety, whereas the Goddess is all about love, unity and tolerance... of course the changes she brings are not always soft and gentle, f.e. the false prophet "Descending Messiah" is doomed to die, but in the end she's the Goddess to die, but in the end she's the Goddess if love and life, and not a deity of hate and destruction, as both Jehovah and Satan are: There's no real difference between the both of them, as christianity and satanism are just two sides of the same deal!"

And finally, "Epilogue", his seeking soul and broken heart will find healing and tranquillity. A rather obvious end... Anyway, do you wish to add something regarding the last song?

—"I don't think of "Epilogue" as being that obvious: Though it might seem that Ariman is bound to die while the music is becoming slower and slower, one cannot tell if this means really the end of the anchorite- just as you think that it's over, the music starts again with an invocation of the 4 elements which are the symbols of life... Has Ariman faced the final curtain, or does the dance of life begin for him again (reincarnation maybe?)? Or was it all just a dream?? It's up to the listener to find an answer, that's why the last song is sub-titled "Arcanum in Anchorange"

Booklet contains images of Egyptian art. Coincidence or big fascination by this ancient culture?

—"As you might have noticed (Ha- that's what I call understatement!), I've got a pagan-matriarchal philosophy of life, hence Antichrisis is an anagram which means "Sacred Dances to honour Isis, our Queen". I was always fascinated by pre-dynastic Egyptian culture, as it reveals a powerful matriarchal tradition in theological as well as in social terms. Isis, the Great Goddess of Egypt, is one of the numerous manifestations of the Goddess all over the world, one who I feel deeply related to! There are many stories and legends about Isis, and in early Egyptian it is said that she came in shape of a feathered serpent and gave birth to the universe by hatching the cosmic egg... so you see that the cover-artwork aims at a certain purpose: No detail is left to chance!"

Willowcat (female vocals on CD) won't co-operate anymore. Weren't you satisfied with her participation? Will you include a new female singer in upcoming releases?

—"Willowcat is a tricky story: She was never a permanent member of Antichrisis, rather sort of a long-term session-vocalist. Although she is a highly gifted singer, I could never rely on her because she was very inconstant and unmotivated to a certain extent: She never seemed to realise that being an artist is not only a question of being talented, but also a question of discipline and hard work... Well, to cut a long story short: I wasn't too satisfied with our co-operation when we worked on "Missa Depositum Custodi", but while recording "Cantara Anachoreta", she really made me blow my fuse because she wasn't prepared at all when we entered the studio: Neither did she know the lyrics she had to sign, nor did she know about her entries (although we've been rehearsing quite a lot!)... it was so darn frustrating, especially as she developed some kind of diva-attitude an went completely bonkers during "Goodbye to Jane"... Enough is enough, and so I decided to break up our artistic co-operation after the recordings of "Cantara Anachoreta". Nevertheless I don't have any grudge against her and wish her the best on her way...

SECOND CHAPTER

In the very beginning your second album was supposed to be entitled "Kyrahnean Hymns"; though you changed it to "Dead Romantic Angels"...and finally to "A Legacy of Love". Tell us a bit about these changes: How did the concept change?

—"The aforementioned concepts emerged at a time of my life of perfect equilibrium: Both "Kyrahnean Hymns" and "Dead Romantic Angels" were supposed to contain only lovesongs (though performed in different ways according to the corresponding concept), whereas "A Legacy of Love" deals predominantly with the experience of bereavement. Only two songs ("Nightswan" and "Planet Kyrah") remained from previous concepts, because they are perfect mirrors of chastity and virtousness of true love…".

Your first album was dedicated to a lost love and this second album is also a tribute to another one...how has destiny taken care of you? Do you feel guilty?

—"I'll have to admit that I haven't got the slightest idea why I had to go through all that tough shit during the last two years: OK, the result of all these emotional misfortunes lead to a very heart-touching album, but if broken-heartedness is the price for the songs on "A Legacy of Love", then this price could be much too high! But no need to argue: These things have happened, and I'll have to come to terms with them somehow, if I like it or not…maybe one day it'll all make sense?!.

Anyway: If there is such thing like destiny, then there seems to be nothing that anyone can do about it, and so there's no need to feel maltreated or guilty or anything else…in the end it's up to me if I take up that very gauntlet or not!".

You don't feel shy about expressing your most personal emotions in this naked form. In which extent do you want to confess all your "sins"? Does the audience have a totally passive role?

—"I don't think in terms like "guilt" or "sin": they mean nothing to me —and as there's no such thing like sin, there's also nothing to confess! I don't think that the harrowing affairs I've experienced are some kind of "punishment" for something I might have done wrong— they are simply something I had to experience to fulfil my karmic destiny, and it's on me to learn or to reject the learning objective...

Of course the audience has a passive role insofar as listening to music on tape or CD isn't exactly what one would call an interactive process — and after all I don't care what kind of expectations an audience might have: The music of ANTICHRISIS is made and performed just for me and to some extent to those involved in this band— not for anybody else!".

What can you say on Moonshadow's death? Does Moonshadow represent the human shell? Does Sid walk into higher levels?

—"Moonshadow always represented the innocent child inside of me, a faithful entity that believed in dreams and miracles: And while Moonshadow survived quite a few emotional disasters, the bereavement of his last love became too much and he passed away... and what remained is Sid: He doesn't walk into higher levels; in fact he's quite identical with Moonshadow —except that he doesn't believe any more: neither in love, nor in dreams, nor in miracles! Moonshadow represented the paragon of innocence, whereas Sid is simply a disillusioned doom merchant… I don't think I like that guy that much!".

"I don't think that the harrowing affairs I've experienced are some kind "punishment" for something I might have done wrong- they are simply something I had to experience to fulfill my karmic destiny…"

The preface also includes a poem by Christina Rossetti. What does this poem pass on you?

—"This poem speaks for itself and reflects my attitude towards life and death in a perfect way —I couldn't have described in better words the insignificance of what we might think of as being important: All we are is dust in the wind and it doesn't matter at all if we will be remembered or forgotten…

"When I'm dead, my Dearest,
sing no sad songs for me,
plant thou no roses at my head,
nor shady cypress tree:
Be the green grass above me
with showers and dewdrops wet;
and if thou wilt, remember,
and if thou wilt, forget."
Christina Rossetti (1830 - 1894)

My vocabulary lacks of enough positive words to speak properly about "A Legacy of Love". It's certainly hard to describe this album in usual parameters. One thing is for sure: You've succeeded in doing an even more varied album! "A Legacy of Love" again turned out to be a symbiosis of large musical manifestations. Folkloric moments, the harshness of some riffs, those emotional melodies: All these elements coexist in perfect harmony. How have these elements contributed to enrich your new compositions?

—"There's no answer to this question….I mean, ANTICHRISIS presented a large variety of different styles and musical elements even on "Cantara Anachoreta", but I have developed my musicianship as well as I have gone through totally different worlds of emotions since then, and in addition to this I've found two highly gifted musicians in Alex and Lisa, who both helped me to make "A Legacy of Love" sound as uniquely as it does! Their contribution and devotion enhanced my musical language….but anyway: Thank you very much for your compliments!".

First track ("How can I live on top of a mountain?") also belongs to your Irish Folk-project "Sid & Måns". Could this project be considered a prolongation of ANTICHRISIS? Is it a necessary complement of ANTICHRISIS' compositions?

—"I'm doing lots of Irish Folk-projects under various names, and "Sid & Måns" was just one of them (it doesn't exist any more as Måns returned to Sweden a few months ago). "How can I live on Top of the Mountain" is nevertheless an exclusive ANTICHRISIS-track I'd put on the "Sid & Måns"—demo just because it fitted nicely to the rest of the material — but the difference to the other songs on that tape should be quite obvious!. ANTICHRISIS is a totally unique project that stands for its own, hence any other musical activities of mine can not be seen as some kind of prolongation, as there can never be a prolongation to a climax!"

Second track ("Nightswan") epitomises your second lost love...is this correct? A volatile presence? What does "The Beltane" mean?

—"Nightswan" is a song of pure and innocent love, written while I thought this love would last forever: I'm glad that Lisa did sing that song in the studio, because I simply couldn't —it did hurt too much...

Beltane is an old celtic festival, originally celebrated on the night before the 1st. of May with dances and fires, and it is said to be the best night for a wedding: On that occasion the couples seal their wedding promise by jumping together over the fire...and once my love and me did that, too.

Would you consider "Trying not to breathe" the most heart-rending song you've ever written? "And I hate you, and I love you for what you've done to me…": Is this the point where the beauty of contradiction in love lies?

—"Trying not to breathe" is definitely one of the most desperate songs I've ever written, because it deals with my personal experience of committing suicide…there lies no beauty at all in a line like "I hate you and I love you for what you've done to me", because it means that the two strongest human emotions are fighting against each other within oneself, and this is nothing but a horrible outburst of devastation! Being torn apart between love and hate is a most dangerous process, because it can easily end in self-destruction: Someone broke your heart, but you still love her/him because of the good times you'd shared, and at the same time you hate that person because she/he has the power to make you feel so tremendously bad —it's like being a small iron particle in the centre between two strong magnets: Unable to move and unable to escape..."

"Anyway: If there is such thing like destiny, then there seems to be nothing anyone can do about it"

You've included a new version of "Baleias" (a track also included on "Cantara Anachoreta") in which you've added some important changes: Musically, it's faster and the pipes create a great atmosphere. When it comes to the lyrics…what does the ocean stand for (instead of the river)? What about the elimination of the last part of the original lyrics (where you mentioned Eva) and this new part?

—"Well, a river flows into something bigger, into an ocean…at the time I recorded "Baleias" for "Cantara Anachoreta", I had experienced the river of love, but by the time I did the new version for "A Legacy of Love", I knew how much wilder and more awesome the ocean of love was —hence the new version is faster and somehow "deeper" than the old one…

"…I couldn't have described in bettter words the insignificance of what we might think of as being important: All we are is dust in the wind and it doesn't matter at all if we will remembered or forgotten…".

Concerning Eva: The last part of the first version of "Baleias" was once meant to be a prayer for love: Nevertheless I lost this love, and the river ran dry! Then I found a new and greater love, I dived deep into the ocean of devotion, but I had to lose this precious love, too….and so the lines at the end of the new version of "Baleias" have become a prayer again: This time a prayer to the Goddess for granting me the strength to endure and to withstand fate's merciless stroke…

"We all come from the Goddess
and to her we will return
like a drop of rain into the ocean"
(Traditional witches' chant)

Is "Dancing in the Midnight Sun" a more "reflexive" song of those extraordinary moments? A chant for love beyond all limits?

—"I wouldn't call "Dancing in the Midnight Sun" a chant for love, but an elegy for a lost love; an aural monument for a love that ended much too soon: It reflects the beauty of love as well as the tribulation of its loss, hence it's both tribute and lament at the same time!".

Where's Planet Kyrah? Is it far away from our constellation?

—"Planet Kyrah is the fictitious planet of love: It came close to the earth in 1997, but then it suddenly disappeared into the galaxy of broken promises….".

You've used a couple of french expressions in "The Sea"…Have you chosen them to create a special feeling? Why?

—"I've chosen these french expressions just because they sound more "poetic" than the english or german ones: I'm always choosing words for the lyrics with great care, because words are not just a chain of vowels and consonants, moreover they possess sounds and images of their own that have to fit perfectly to the corresponding song".

Your reference to classic characters Romeo and Juliet in "Our Last Show" gives a theatrical aspect to the story…would you consider yourself being a modern Romeo?

—"No, I don't think that I'm a modern Romeo: I may be a very romantic person and though I'm feeling a bit like one of those "star-crossed lovers" that William Shakespeare mentioned, I'm not a victim of misunderstandings and intrigues like Romeo was….it's just that I sometimes think we're nothing more but actors on life's badly illuminated stage, forced to take part in comedies or dramas without any chance of getting to know the script or to rehearse".

Which is the hidden message of the raven's cry on "Forever I Ride"?

—"In northern-european mythology the raven is the bird of death and rebirth (just like the vulture in egyptian/african myths) that calls forth the end —and so the raven in "Forever I Ride" is the harbinger of love's decline, forcing the fool to saddle up again"

What will happen after the end of December? Umm, I have no idea who's Hawkeye Pierce…

—"As "End of December" won't appear on the album, the secret of Hawkeye Pierce won't be revealed as well…but what'll happen after the end of december is unequivocally explained in "The Farewell":

"I've been waiting till the End of December
but no more will I ride
for the winter solstice's child
will pass away silently on a midsummer's night"

"The Farewell" can be considered as a summary of all the aforementioned songs with a ray of hope at the end, right? Anyway, I cannot understand the last line (due to my ignorance of german language): Would you mind to translate "Ich liebe Dich für immer"?

—"Ich liebe Dich für immer" simply means "I love you forever": The most beautiful thing someone can say to you, but eventually also the greatest lie of all! There is no ray of hope at the end of "The Farewell", only a yearning for everlasting sleep and tranquillity:

"...but now I'm going home
to a place where love is more than just a four-letter word
And as I kiss the memory of yours goodnight
I'm beginning to see the light…"

And while he fades away, the words that he once believed in keep echoing in his mind…

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

And you ask me what's beauty? No doubt, beauty is Empyrium. It's like an mystical experience... Empyrium oomphs sentiment in all its particles... You're treated to walk into a desolated wood where sadness and melancholy rule. Personally, I was swallowed up by "Songs of Moors & Mystic Fields". It made my heart melt away with such dreary melodies, albeit it was not only the music; the poetic style of lyrics really impressed me (totally enjoyable the use of ancient English by a German). They show an almost obsessive fascination by Romantic artists Then... Is Empyrium a modern version of Romantic splendour? Read what El Bello Ragazzo (better known as Markus Stock) told me about Empyrium and himself (Just a suggestion, Markus: Why don't you use your grandfather as guest vocalist? He's much more better than you!!!).

I'm sure that most of the things regarding Empyrium have provided you uplifting experiences. During all these years (from late '92/beginning '93).. Which of them would you point out? If you look back... What's your view how the flower (Empyrium) has been growing in your garden?

—"There's no special point of time which I would like to point out as the most uplifting experience concerning Empyrium. It happens every time a new composition is received, composed or recorded —the feelings, the energies that rush through me during these moments are the most uplifting, enthralling parts of making art with Empyrium. The moment (for example at a rehearsal) you are one with the art, when there's nothing in the world except for you and the music embracing your sentiments— that's what is important for me, and that must be the most uplifting concept of true art! The flower of Empyrium has been growing impressively-no wonder how cherised it is by its creator. We are near to experience the flower's full grandeur, yet we know we will never actually experience it. But just to care about it, to feed it with its essential food, to watch after it —day in, day out— this alone makes it worth to let it grow and to revel in the dream of one day seeing it grow to the stars and swallowing everything shallow, unaeshetic and false. Der Weg ist das Ziel..."

Markus and his mixing desk

> "... The feelings, the energies that rush through me during these moments are the most uplifting, enthralling parts of making art with Empyrium".

Into a scale of personalities... Where would you place the band? Maybe this question is a bit "out of order" because a vital part of one's existence doesn't need any kind of competition, if you understand what I mean...

—"I understand what you mean of course. There's definitely no reason for any kind of competition when it comes to things essential for one's existence. To stay with the term of a flower. I'd say Empyrium is my rain whilst the dear one is my light".

It's clear, there's an special feeling that you seek in music: Nature Mysticism like atmosphere, which would be comparable to (for example) Ulver's "Kveldssanger" album. Do you agree with this comparison? Do you want to present a wider interpretatin of Empyrium´s essence?

—"Quite correct, to say at least. As for Ulver, since you know so bloody well that I am almost making a religion out of this band, ..." the comparison doesn't surprise, though I'd like to point out, that it is the atmosphere that might be similar in both bands, not the music! Nature Mysticism is exactly what we want to spread with Empyrium. We want the listener to see picture in front of his mind's eye. Pictures of the forest at dawn, the foggy moors, vast mist-veiled fields, wintry streams etceteras. Your imagination knows no boundaries! Once the listener has reached that dim and misty place that is summoned by our music he will recognise it is him —every single of his emotions is reflected in that scenery— he's one with our art and one with the myths of nature! Like in all olden myths there's a very tragic yet romantic and sentimental feeling in our music as well- revel in it I say! These are heights you won't experience in normal, shallow life!".

By the way, What's your stance of Ulver's "new concept" in "The Madrigal..."? When will Empyrium will release an album of grim and extreme Black Metal?

—"You are walking on dangerous territory Raúl!!! Everyone who knows me well doesn't bring up the name Ulver twice. I might get carried away for the following hours. But not today, since I am in the public here I will have to pull myself together. So, in a nutshell: Nattens Madrigal is not only the best grim black metal album since "Transilvanian Hunger", but also for me the best album released last year. It has all Ulver stands for. It's dark, full of mysticism, longing, tragic, heroic, beautiful and grim. The way lyrics and music work together makes me speechless —this is philosophy— sheer passion. This is what makes me love black metal! No childish wannabe evilness, but the darkest, most passionate and extreme form of ART I know of. All hail to them! It's unlikely that Empyrium will release an album of that form, but because we fear to lose potential listeners or anything, but our concept does not demand such an extreme form of expression at current, but who knows how it will develop in the future!".

> "I'd rather live of a thousand German marks per mon th and be satisfied with my life than earning thrice and being a slave to that total shallow system of bureaucracy! I simply loathe tem! Hail Misanthropy! Hail Antisociality!"

HOW TO MAKE A LIVING AND BEING HONEST WITH YOURSELF

Well, it seems that the plans for your own studio are now getting concrete. Feel free to use this space to give publicity of it (equipment, bands recording there,...).

—"Yes, currently I still have all the equipment at home and run the studio from the ex-living room of my parents, but in the summer I plan to establish it professionally at another place. People interested should feel free to contact me. I'm working with 16 tracks (soon 24 tracks) and it's a mix between digital recording (Stand Alone HD Recorders and ADAT) and good old analog techniques, meaning an analog 48 Channel Mixer as well a good amount of effects and dynamic processors, partly in vintage tube techniques. Contact me!".

What are the prospects for this project? A job where you could build up an existence upon... Chance or just a dream?

—"My goal is to earn money with something my heart and soul belongs to. I have tried long enough now to earn money with an ordinary office job, but failed miserably. Those people I work with don't understand me nor do I understand them. They are living on another planet than myself and I have felt lots of grief lately because I simply cannot handle the current situation. I'd rather live of a thousand German Marks per month and be satisfied per month and be satisfied with my life than earning thrice and being a slave to that total shallow system of bureaucracy! I simply loathe them! Hail Misanthropy! Hail Antisociality! Yes, I want to earn a living with the studio".

DEPTH AN SUPERFICIALITY

What do you mostly hate in the superficiality of your dull job? Aren't you afraid to become the average husband? (The man comes from the work... "Heh, Where's the newspaper? What did you cook? Ehh, What's that? When I said a "steak", I meant a steak, not a crap". Once a week they have sex, but after the man has done his thing for five minutes, he doesn't speak a single word to her and falls asleep. Not to mention when he gets drunk to "forget" during a while how empty and senseless in his life... STOP!).

Andreas

—"I basically hate all about it. To get a treatment like an idiot by someone I view as most stupid, shallow and simply below me, to wear those ugly masks, to be amongst them and their senseless ideals, those dead, extinguished man. I just want rest from this world. I have thought a lot about maybe becoming one day as they are, being the disastrous husband you described, but then some wise man whom I told the psychical dilemma which I am involved in told me: If that kills you as an artist, you haven't been much of an artist before. Thank you, you know who you are! He's so bloody right, and even if it's hard to stick to statements such as "Strife is evolution" or "What does not kill you makes you stronger" in times like this, they are true. They work. If they have gone through this and have kept the precious flame burning in me then I am sure it will be wildly burning afterwards – stronger than ever before".

I still remember some of your words (in one of those letters not so long ago) regarding our discussion about superficial personalities. "... Everyone should have a place for small "profanities" in his life; to only dwell on the very surface of that deep sea which is so awe-inspiring and beautiful, but they couldn't care less about it...". How would describe your own "profanities"? Do you try to hold the balance of power on between depth and surface?

—"It is needed to hold the balance between the depth and the surface methinks. If you are constantly only researching the very bottom of that awe-inspiring ocean you will be insane in no time. Equilibrium is all! What are my profanities then? Having a stupid talk about football with friends, playing football or tennis for that sake with my brother, drinking a beer and eating potato chips while watching stupid films on TV etceteras. Those profanities are needed and every man who tells me he is a man dwelling in the depth is either a liar or completely insane. All great man is condemned to turn bitter, empty or insane after a while of experiencing the shallowness of this world, but through only researching the depths this natural process will be strengthened a great deal".

> "All great man is condemned to turn bitter, empty or insane after a while of experiencing the shallowness of this world"

From now Martin (Prophecy) is doing all the "fan-mail" and this means that all those people you write/wrote who do not have any deeper meaning to you will not hear from you anymore. This might sound "hard" or whatever... Do you have something to tell those who wrote to your address and are "still" waiting for your answer?

—"Don't wait, I don't have time for your stupid letters, Ha Ha! No seriously, it simply became too much with the time. Now Martin is collecting all the letters and is sorting out those interesting enough and is sending them to me once an amount is reached. So, you still might hear from me, but I am not able to write back in a week like it has been in the early days. It simply became too much and I sincerely hope you understand that. But people who don't have anything to say can safe the stamp. I am not interested to exchange thoughts about Dimmu Borgir's corpsepaint or the last Old Man's Child album".

What about your plans to print your own zine? In the beginning you were collecting some interviews some interviews of your own but it seems that there will be finally some kind of "split-zine" with Marco Steinmetz (Monumental Zine), right? Reveal us something of the material we'll find through its pages.

—"The plans are still existing, even if the zine's delay is at this point of writing already ridiculous, but "a zine that is not delayed is not a zine" (T. Ketola). So, yes it will be some sort of split zine with Marco Steinmetz of ex-Monumental Mag., like things look these days it will be published in German instead of (as formerly planned) the English language, because we both think in a well written, "out of ordinary", German written Underground Fanzine is rare, if not non-existing in the German Underground. Contents range form the best of Metal (Emperor, Ulver, Arcturus, Hefeystos, etc) to the best non-metal (White Willow, Canaan, Penitent) plus talks with photographers, zine-makers, as well as articles, poetry, more art, reviews and atmosphere. Fingers crossed it will be out one day or not too far away (note the rhyme, please!)".

> "Love is indeed a feeling so pure and beatiful that one could look upon it as the most important and a power that keep us alive– but I think people are generally forgetting the cruelty of love, which is very dangerous..."

ORIGINALITY TOUCHED HIS SOUL

Shouldn't Empyrium be considered an exclusive consequence of your innerself? What's the role of each member in the band

—"Empyrium is by no means my solo-project if that's what you are aiming at with your question. It's certain that I am kind of the "leader of the pack", being responsible for the concepts and the general outcome of music and lyrics, but Empyrium would not be the same without Andreas fantastic melodies, his excellent ideas when it comes to structure and arrangement or Nadine's skills on the acoustic instruments. Empyrium is in all likelyhood a combination of the talents brought in by each band member – a real band if you wish to say so".

Empyrium have definitely secured a very personal style through "Songs of Moors & Misty Fields" (of course, I haven't forgotten "A Wintersunset..." and the demo). What's the secret of success? Should we definitely associate Empyrium and the term "original"?

—"Thank you for the compliment, though I do not look upon originality as the be-all-end all of our music. I think it's an important factor. The "secret of success", as you called it, might be that we simply follow heart and soul exclusively while composing new Emphonies. We are never aiming to sound like "our favourite band" or something, we just write music with our typical sense for melodies, our own structures and arrangement. Of course there are inspirations of several bands, but you won't hear them too obvious in Empyrium since it is the atmosphere that counts in music for me, and I am rather inspired by the feeling of a song than its melodies. Without wanting to sound arrogant, I think Empyrium has already developed a very individual kind of music, that doesn't fit the usual categories such as black metal, gothic metal (spit!) or whatever. We listen to an enormous wide range of music, from Classical Music over Prog Rock to grim black metal, and bring all these preferences into our music, thus the originality of Empyrium".

It's not exaggerated at all to look at the leather digipack version of "Songs of Moors & Misty Fields" and say that it's one of the most beautiful designed discs in the world. Who came with the idea for the layout...? Does it convey an "aristocratic presence" to illustrate your poems?

—"Thanks again and I agree, it is the most beautiful designed disc in the world. The idea was basically born when we were at Martin's place and were planning the layout. Actually I had the atmosphere that should be spread through the layout in mind, but couldn't come up with any other descriptions than "antiquated, noble and somehow dark". We couldn't find anything fitting though and just came up with rather silly ideas. Eventually an olde book from the beginning of this century reached our hands and see, it was bound in brown leather. As soon as I saw it I had the vision of the layout in mind, contacted Mr. Ketola quickly to design the grandiose "E" and — violá!— the leather digipack was born! I don't know for sure what you mean with your last question, but I guess you are referring to the "non-existing" layout on the lyric spread. I love it this way-just the words, simple yet effective I'd say".

Nadine has supplied more mystical passages this time. Her contribution with the flute and the cello are for sure the perfect combination (an enchanting contrast for the metal side of Empyrium).Could you give us a wider concept of "Songs of Moors & Mystic Fields"?

—"It was intended to bring more tension, variety and equilibrium into our music through the everlasting contrasts between pure, dark folk-inspired parts and the orchestral metal outbursts. And indeed, the mystical character of the music is only enhanced by the flutes, the cello and the acoustic guitar-it gives the music a very natural, "real" flair. "Songs of Moors & Mystic Fields" is all about nature, mysticism, nostalgia and most of all melancholy. In a nutshell, it's about nature and man, how man is inspired by nature's offerings, and finally is getting one with the moods of nature. The combination of the micro and macrocosm if you like. More about that in following answers".

"I kind of feel like a "brother at heart" with them and the artist of the romantic movement in general-it mirrors me, my longings, fascinations and my thoughts in general".

THE LAST SIGN OF NOSTALGIA

"When shadows grow longer" serves of golden prologue to this album. It gives an ethereal harmony of... Those first verses are glimpses to have a total understanding of the whole lyrical work. Let us know a detailed interpretation about the connection of shadows, sorrow and tears.

—"Very true indeed. "When shadows grow longer" is intended to give the listener a view over what he has to expect in the next 45 minutes, lyrically as well as musically. Even though the music is very calm on this track, it spreads an enormous antiquated, dark and romantic atmosphere. It was also the first poem I had written for the album (I am a liar "Mourners" was the first one!) and it formed (together with "Mourners") the direction, the whole concept the album would be embraced by, from the lyrical as well as musical side. What I try to express with the poem is the enormous powers that we are entangled by when the night spreads its dreadful (yet ethereal) cloak. At nighttime all kind of emotions are enhanced, be they of romantical or negative nature. As I wrote in the lyric to "The Blue Mist of Night": "there is no shelter-no escape from our heart". When you are alone at night there's just you and your thoughts, everything is asleep, non-existing for you in those moments. Of course this loneliness tears the grieving ones apart. I had (and still have) that picture in mind while composing the melody and the verses of a young, fair maiden sitting in her sparely lit in old times, while outside the sun sets to slumber. The beloved one is still not at home and she mourns the dear ones departed and even more those are still to depart".

"The Blue Mist of Night" contains a pure anti-rational orientation; listening to what your heart says. It's able to lead you to another place. What can you tell us about that "dim and misty place"?

—"That dim and misty place is the central place of the whole album I'd say. Another word I often use for this soul-landscape is the "dim values of melancholy" to which I journey at times. The lyrical part of this song is about the same theme as "When shadows..." just that I have portrait the enhancing, uplifting sides of the nighttime-loneliness as well. You can't see much humans out on the gravel paths here (of course in the city that is different) as soon as the sun has set. It's all quiet, beautiful and a joy to all the misanthropes at heart".

We can feel more tragic vibes in "Mourners": "... lost is the hope of those who walk the moors with pain in heart, and all joy sinks-buried deep forever presumed dead...". What's the significance of these words for you?

—"Mourners" is able to spread the kind of feelings in me that I receive whilst reading one of those old and tragic folk tales, of which actually many exist about the moors. "Mourners" is vastly inspired by a very dismal landscape of our area called "Das Scwarze Moor" (translated "The Black Moor") and I tell you it lives up its name. It's misty almost the whole year through there. Lots of little black lakes (and the water in there is really black), small, crippled trees wherever you look. It's an indescribable dark and melancholic mood this scenery casts upon one. When I walked through it in the first time I had tons of very dark and melancholic mood going through my head and I immediately was like bewitched. I read everything about the moors, the myth, the tales, etc and I finally ended up with a book in which I found both, the poem by Annette von Droste-Hülshoff as well as pictures by a certain Jürgen Holzhausen, whose photo is now our coverartwork. The lines you cited have a very strong meaning for me-it perfectly reflects the mood the moors are able to spread. After the first visit at the moor I wrote the lyrics to "Mourners" and I was really astonished afterwards to experience how much my thoughts and my visions of the moor and the ones behind "Der Knabe im Moor" have in common. "Der Knabe im Moor" is definitely another league of poetry than "Mourners", but the main idea behind it is basically the same. It's all about the way sceneries such as the moor can inspire our fantasy-how they let us see more than just trees, water and mist...".

"Ode to Melancholy" is pretty inspired by British Romanticism in the vein of Lord Byron, Keats, etc. One lyric of this lyric reveals a very important aspect: "... Melancholy; still my desire; O let my heart by thee inspire...": Is Melancholy not only Sadness? Is it true inspiration for you as an artist? Why your fascination by Romantic Literature?

—"True indeed, "Ode to Melancholy" is vastly inspired by the British Romantic movement which includes such genius as Lord Byron, Keats, Shelly. I love their way of writing poetry —the language, the sheer passion with which their poems are brought to the fore-it's so filled with emotions and depth, with unearthly beauty, discomfort, pain and so much truth. I kind of feel like a "brother at heart" with them and the artist of the Romantic movement in general— it mirrors me, my longings, fascinations and my thoughts in general. "Ode to melancholy" is kind of a tribute to both, the feeling of melancholy which inspired the Romantics so vastly, as well as the Romantic themselves. I even borrowed lines from the mighty Keats but it's up to you to find out which. Indeed melancholy is not only sadness, but a fountain of inspiration. A ghostly realm in which I revel at times and many of the lyrics of Empyrium are mere reports from the dim vales of melancholy. I am just the medium to bring them to the forth and I am glad and look upon it as blessing to be able to tell you the stories from there...".

"Lover's grief" speaks about the emotional pain of love; at the same time the most beautiful thing ever... I'd underline : "... The moon persistence makes me ask... Why can't we be stars? Stars that shine forever. Stars that unite with the night...". A sigh to reach the Eternal Love? Is this definitely the highest level to reach the purity of one's soul?

—"Lover's grief" is much about realising that everything, and most painfully beauty and love, must die. Nothing is forever, how strongly we may wish so, one day we will face the grief when it dies. That's for me the basic dilemma and the immense cruelty of love. Aren't all lovers liars at the same? Aren't they constantly untrue to themselves? It's a sigh from the bottom of my heart to reach love beyond the borders of time, yet I know it is impossible, which is relaxed in the poem in the end, in a very sorrowful way. Love is indeed a feeling so pure and beautiful that one could look upon it as the most important and a power that keeps us alive— but I think people are generally forgetting the cruelty of love, which is very dangerous... but. It's of course easier for them".

"The ensemble of silence" is (without doubt) the perfect epilogue. I'm going to end this series of quotations with "... in the silence of the night I loose myself. It makes me drunken with its sweet blue sound... Just I and the poetry of the night— now forever one...". What does the ensemble of silence represent? Would it be the consummation of a mystical experience?

—"The ensemble of silence" is the night— every part of the nocturnal scenery is one part of the whole ensemble that makes the night such a silent, grim beauty. The lyric is basically about the same theme as "The Blue Mist of Night" but here it is portrayed from a more personal point of view. The main character in this poem is facing the night, feels much grief in his loneliness, but in the end is giving himself away to his destiny to become one with the nocturnal spirit, being a part of the ensemble at heart".

What about the videoclip of the song "Mourners"? A picture of this visual presentation, please. Is it something far away of usual metal videos?

—"It's still quite uncertain if we will release this idea-if it will happen then this summer or autumn. The video (like I have it in mind) will be based upon the storyline of "Der Knabe im Moor", which is about a young boy in the 19th century who has to cross the moor on his way back home. The journey through the moor turns out to be full of ghastly experiences for him, since his imagination actually becomes one with the eerie character of the moor. But I rather let it all be a surprise, and since it is not certain that it will ever happen I should better shut up here".

The band doesn't like quite much the idea of playing concerts (at least in conventional halls). You have refused a couple of offers, right? Which are your arguments? How would the perfect live-appearance for Empyrium be?

—"We just have refused an offer to go on tour with Katatonia and another really big act, since I still think that our music a) Wouldn't work in the same way in some stinky club as it works at home b)would almost be impossible to re-create on stage (we would have to do really primitive version of the actual glory of the songs). Eventually we would need a horde of guest musicians to come up with a satisfying outcome and I am still rather pessimistic towards the idea of using guest musicians, but time will tell. Maybe I will change my mind one day about this, but as for now, don't expect any Empyrium gigs. The perfect live-appearance? Maybe playing at an olde castle ruin, with a Romantic scenery in the background. That would support our music quite good I think, but I am just dreaming a little here".

Your debut album was released in the end of spring of 1996. The flute was not used quite much at that time but the atmosphere of the album was more based on the synthesiser and melodic guitars.

"Indeed melancholy is not only sadness, but a fountain of inspiration. A ghostly realm in which I revel at times and many of the lyrics of Empyrium are mere reports from the dim vales or melancholy. I am just the medium to bring them to the forth and I am glad and look upon it as blessing to tell you stories from there..."

How do you see the progression from "A wintersunset..." to "Songs of Moors..."?

—"I think "Songs..." is more mature than " A wintersunset..." was. The whole soundscape has become fuller, richer in details, more powerful and most of all more varied. The arrangements as well as the structures are better. The production is better and the performance is better. Musically it's simply, yes you guessed it, better. As for the atmosphere. It's a darker album I think, with a more nocturnal feel to it. It's also more intense and deeper, musically as well a lyrically".

INSPIRATION AND DISCIPLINE

Is there any place for improvisation in Empyrium? Is it a symbiosis of artistic inspiration and German discipline?

—"Ha ha, I like this, so yes, Empyrium is a combination of artistic inspiration and German discipline, as there is indeed space left for improvisation, especially at the drum, bass and lead guitar department. Everything else is most of time perfectly worked out, but in the future we plan to work even more with improvisations, especially when it comes to the leads".

Are you thinking, more frequently, in the possibility of incorporating some unusual instruments to Empyrium's sound? You told me once that you wanted to buy a Mellotrom... Are you sure that this "psychedelic" instrument would fit in Empyrium?

—"We are actually planning to incorporate as much "real" acoustic instruments as possible. We have talked about a string quartet and if possible an oboe as well. Also, four, instead of two (like on "Songs...") different kinds of flutes will be used next time around. A twelve string as well as a six string acoustic guitar too and plans are made to invest money into a sampler as well, since the Mellotrom is unfortunately not affordable for poor metal musicians as Empyrium. The Mellotrom is not a "psychedelic" instrument and such, but has of course been used by many "psycho" bands in the past. But basically said, it the first sampler ever existed and it worked with analog techniques. The strings as well as the choirs sound simply not of this earth and I'd love using one, but as for now I think we will have to stick to samples of the Mellotrom, even though the real thing would be something different".

As far as I know, you're currently working on an acoustic album... Is this correct? Do you want to reach a certain level of musical purity? Is it something with Empyrium or by yourself' In what ways do you think that the new material is going to develop?

—"Yes, correct. The recordings will most probably take place this summer. Atmospheres of nature mysticism can be perfectly re-created with acoustic instruments due to the purity of those bands. There will be acoustic instruments exclusively on that one, as well as choir like singing most of the time, but basically there won't be much vocals on there. It's all dominated by the acoustic guitars and the winds... The material for "Many moons ago..." (so the title of the MCD) is completely composed by myself, but I guess Andreas will be involved as well when it comes to the final arrangements and structures as well the "finalisation" of some of the melodies. As for future Empyrium material. Those few parts we have composed so far do sound different again then those on "Songs of...". It's even more varied and more monotonous I think. There will be much progressive elements in there as well as a more "black metalish" feel if I may say so, but it's not the time yet to talk about it, since it could as well happen that all the material we have written so far ends up in the gas chamber again, so I'd better talk about it when the time's right, OK?".

Thanks a bunch for your time, Markus. If there's anything else you want to say...

—"Do you think there's really something to add after 27 in-depth questions? Thanks whole-heartedly Raúl and stay the one you are!".

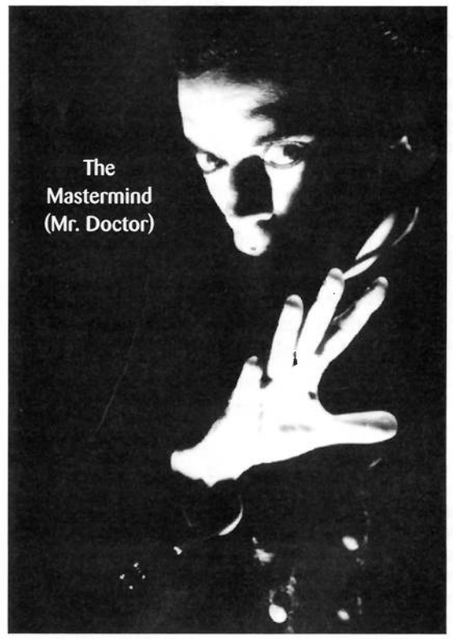
THE DEVILISH DECADE

1987

The sect of the Devil Doll begins first rehearsals under the guidance of Mr. Doctor. Some of the members are recruited through an advertisement with the heading: A MAN IS LIKELY TO BECOME GREAT THE MORE HE IS DOMINATED BY REASON: FEW CAN ACHIEVE GREATNESS-AND NONE IN ART-IF THEY ARE DOMINATED BY ILLUSION. Originally tow different line-ups operate under the name Devil Doll. One in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia (now Slovenja), the other in Venice, Italy. Mr. Doctor introduces in the live set a lengthy composition titled THE MARK OF THE BEAST. Devil Doll studios in Ljubljana to record it: the young engineer Juri Toni, whose work for Laibach had gained a certain reputation, sits behind the mixing desk in one of the recording sessions. Instantly shocked by Mr. Doctor creation ("a full dimension into the labyrinth of the mind", he will describe it) Juri Toni will work with Devil Doll in the following 10 years.

1988

One copy of THE MARK OF THE BEAST is pressed and housed in a cover hand painted by Mr. Doctor. The record has never been repressed. Rehearsals being for a new Devil Doll project called THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH, inspired by Patrick McGoohan's esoteric British Television series "The Prisoner". The Ljubljana section of Devil Doll (with some help form the Venice section) enter Tivoli Studios to record their first official album. Hurdy Gurdy Records is created in Venice by early fans. Name of the company and logo are chosen by Mr. Doctor himself. Mr. Doctor requires that 10 copies of every Devil Doll album must be pressed in a special velvet box with hand made inserts. This edition exclusive to group members will be repeated for every subsequent Devil Doll release. First live performance of THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH takes place at the Kud France Preseren Theatre in Ljubljana. Cassette tapes of the album are distributed to the audience.



1989

500 copies of THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH are pressed: Devil Doll give second live performance of the album. At the show 150 copies of THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH LP are distributed throughout the audience. Every copy has a different insert prepared by Mr. Doctor, some written with his own blood. The remaining 350 copies are taken by Mr. Doctor and destroyed. The record will be re-issues 5 years later by the Devil Doll Fan Club: only the surviving 150 copies contain both Intro and Outro segments of the original recording (the Intro being Devil Doll's version of The Prisoner theme, the Outro an orchestral accompanied by Mr. Doctor's closing narrative). Rehearsals and live debut of what seems to be the next Devil Doll album, tentatively titled THE BLACK HOLES OF THE MIND, a 45 minute Mr. Doctor composition incorporating esoteric quotations and subliminal messages. Mr. Doctor, accompanied by members of Devil Doll, performs his own interpretations of 14 compositions by German espressionist composer Hanns Eisler. The show takes place by Juri Toni and scheduled for release on vinyl as MR. DOCTOR SINGS HANNS EISLER. Only test pressings emerge; the record is never released. Rehearsals and first live performance of a 60 minute Mr. Doctor composition entitled ELIOGABALUS, inspired by an Antonin Artaud work. A group of nine Devil Doll fans from the Devil Doll Fan Club in Ljublana. Devil Doll enter Tivoli Studios with Juri Toni to edit THE BLACK HOLES OF MIND (subsequently retitled MR. DOCTOR) and EILOGABALUS in order to include both compositions on a single vinyl release. Only the Venice section-augmented by Bor Zuljan's guitar on Mr. Doctor- is used.

1990

A first pressing of ELIOGABALUS is rejected by Mr. Doctor who requires slight remixes and remastering. Test pressings of the rejected pressing circulate among fans. First vinyl pressing of ELIOGABALUS with special die-cut "theatre" cover in an edition of 50 numbered copies. Pictured in the stalls of the theatre are some of the declared influences and inspirations of Mr. Doctor. Hurdy Gurdy reissues ELIOGABALUS on vinyl using the same artwork, but without original die-cut cover and insert. Simultaneously the Devil Doll Fan Club releases its own alternative vinyl pressing in an edition of 900 copies with a completely different gatefold cover. ELIOGABALUS is issued in CD format by Hurdy Gurdy. The Devil Doll Fan Club releases its own CD pressing in an edition of 900 copies with a different booklet.

1991

The political tension rapidly mounts to uncontrollable levels in Yugoslavia. Slovenja is invaded by Belgrade troops. The headquarters for the Devil Doll Fan Club are moved to Venice, Italy. Francesco Carta, who had previously in the HANS EISLER withdraw album, is chosen by Mr. Doctor as Devil Doll's new piano player. Three live-performances by Devil Doll introduce excerpts from the forthcoming album SACRILEGIUM. Following independence from Slovenja, Mr. Doctor joins the two Devil Doll musical groups into one. The line-up is comprised by Sasha Olenjuk (violin), Bor Zuljan (guitar), Davor Klaric (keyboards), Roberto Dani (drums) and Francesco Carta (piano). Devil Doll enter Tivoli Studios to record SACRILEGIUM: for the first time Juri Toni is credited also as co-producer. By the end of the year members of the Devil Doll Fan Club number over 1.000 from 17 countries.

1992

Devil Doll performs SACRILEGIUM at the Trnovo Church in Ljubbljana. The concert incorporates segments of the film THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS, written and directed by Mr. Doctor. Excerpts from the performance are broadcast by Slovene National Television, along with a heavily censored introduction by Mr. Doctor. Following the censorship Mr. Doctor will refuse to be interviewed ever since. Release of SACRILEGIUM by Hurdy Gurdy, CD format only. The Devil Doll Fan Club releases a vinyl edition of 900 copies featuring a gatefold cover designed by Mr. Doctor and Adriana Marac. Mr. Doctor continues work on THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS film. First screening takes place on New Year's Eve in Ljubljana to a selected audience.

1993

Fan Club only release of a soundtrack for THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS., over 70 minutes in length, CD format only, produced in an edition of 900 copies, sold in 72 hours. A double LP pressing announced, but never released, even if some test pressing in proof sleeve exist. Roberto Dani quits Devil Doll. The most talented Slovenian drummer, the young Roman Rate, joins. Devil Doll Fan Club reissues THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH on vinyl. Mr. Doctor gives permission only to a limited repressing of 500 copies with original gatefold cover, but omitting original Intro and Outro. Devil doll rehearse a new Mr. Doctor's composition tentatively entitled THE DAY OF WRATH- DIES IRAE. Devil Doll enter Tivoli Studios in Ljubljana to record a new album. Major fire breaks out in the studio as Mr. Doctor and Juri Toni are mixing the album, both are able to escape (Mr. Doctor unharmed, while Jurij Toni enters hospital for several days). The studio is completely destroyed: all tapes perish in the fire. Police investigations are unable to confirm or deny suspicions of terrorist action as cause. Rumours of Devil Doll splitting are not confirmed, nor denied. After the Tivoli Studios fire Mr. Doctor refuses even to talk about a re-recording. Devil Doll Fan Club in conjunction with Hurdy Gurdy Records release THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH in CD format for the first time. The original Intro is included (the Outro is again missing). The final epitaph on the "cursed album" DIES IRAE seems to be written as Mr. Doctor asks Hurdy Gurdy to release for the musicians involved, 20 copies of a luxurious with all the sheet music and a cassette tape with the music-mostly yet unmixed and without vocals-recorded a few days before the fire on DAT tape. The pressing bears an official Hurdy Gurdy Records Catalogue Number (HG-9).

1994

After many months without any contact with the outer world Mr. Doctor accepts to keep an University Course organised through the Slovenian Film Museum. For over two years his improvised speeches and performances- advertised as RETROVIZOR- take place every Thursday in the Slovenian Museum and/or National Cinematheque greeted by ecstatic response by audiences. At the same time Mr. Doctor accepts to write some enlightening critical essays for the film magazine Ekran. Devil Doll make several live appearances (unannounced) for the first time over a year. DIES IRAE is performed by the group and it is greeted by enthusiastic reviews. A new Mr. Doctor's lengthy composition, THE CARNIVAL OF SOULS (still unreleased), is also performed. Agreement is reached between Devil Doll /Hurdy Gurdy and Renaissance Records to provide for the U.S. CD release of all four Devil Doll albums. Mr. Doctor finally agrees to re-record DIES IRAE. Rehearsals and some recordings take place in various studios in Ljubljana. The church organ are recorded by Michel Fantini Jesurum on the massive organ of the Monte Berico Basilica, near Vicenza, Italy.

1995

Akademik Studios are chosen and re-recordings of DIES IRAE officially start. The line-up- Mr. Doctor (v), Francesco Carta (piano), Sasha Olenjuk (violin), Roman Ratey (drums), Bor Zuljan (guitar), Davor Klaric (keyboards) and Jan Hance (bass)- is argumented by the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra whose leader and first violin is Sasha Olenjuk. Mr. Doctor hears the Croatian Soprano Norina Radovan and ask her to record with Devil Doll. An unforgettable duet take place a few days latter at the Tivoli Studios. Recording of INCUBUS, a nightmarish insert in the middle of DIES IRAE take place. Mr. Doctor decides to record also a second INCUBUS. He created choosing which one to include only at the last moment. This is the reason why the lyrics to this section are not included on the CD booklet or in the long playing cover. Mr. Doctor is still unhappy with the sound of the "Grand Finale" and requires further orchestral recordings: He writes a great new guitar solo for Bor Zuljan and asks also Norina Radovan to re-enter the studio to record the newly written vocal line that closes the album. On September 10th is completed. Preview of DIES IRAE for a selected audience of fans, journalists and musicians. Mr. Doctor is presented only "spiritually". Devil Doll record THE DAY OF WRATH, soundtrack to Mr. Doctor's second experimental movie.

1996

Recording of THE DAY OF WRATH is completed. DIES IRAE released in CD format by Hurdy Gurdy Records. The Devil Doll Fan Club releases 350 copies in vinyl (gatefold cover and 180 grams highest quality vinyl), while Mr. Doctor requires 25 copies in a special grimmix cover. Mixing and filming of THE DAY OF THE WRATH is completed. Announced premiere of THE DAY OF TEH WRATH movie in Ljubljana to a selected audience. Mr. Doctor writes with Francesco Carta an orchestral score to Jean Epstein's 1928 masterpiece THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER. The score is yet unreleased on record. Mr. Doctor and Francesco Carta create the Devil Doll Chamber Orchestra to perform THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER soundtrack: the ensemble includes piano, string quartet and percussion.

1997

The Devil Doll Fan Club obtains permission by Mr. Doctor to release THE DAY OF WRATH soundtrack on CD in a special package to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Devil Doll. Mr. Doctor is asked to write a book on Bernard Herrmann, whose George Harvey Bone alter-ego had been the main inspiration behind DIES IRAE and THE DAY OF WRATH. He accepts The book- that analyses in detail all Herrmann's work and sees also the collaboration of Devil Doll's Francesco Carta- is completed in may and published in June by the Slovenian Cinematheque in conjunction with the Slovenian Ministry of Culture.

THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH

First release: 03/89 on Hurdy Gurdy Records Cat. No. HG-1 (pre-release on cassette tapes 12/88). A CONCEPT BY MR. DOCTOR inspired by Patrick McGoohan's The Prisoner. LYRICS BY MR. DOCTOR, MUSIC BY MR. DOCTOR. Music arranged by MR. DOCTOR &Devil Doll. Devil Doll: Mr. Doctor-Man of thousand voices/organ; Edoardo Beato-Piano, Katia Giubbilei-2nd violin; Albert Dorig-Guitar; Sasha Olenjuk-1st violin, Lucko Kodermac-Drums; Bor Zuljan-Guitar; Jani Hace-Bass, Davor Klaric-Keyboards; with: Paolo Zizich-Backing Vox, Mojca Slobko-Harp. The Devil Doll chorus conducted by Marian Bunic. Recorded at Tivoli Studios, Ljubljana, Yugoslavia (now Slovenja). Mixed: Tivoli Studios, Produced by Mr. Doctor, Cover concept: Mr. Doctor, Lettering: Mr Doctor, Artwork: Mr. Doctor, Photos: Sergio Sutto, Films: G. Paolo Fallani. Tracks: The girl who was... Death: 38'48"+1'56" (between the album and the "Coda" there are 26'20" of silence: Total running time is 66'06", number 6 being the main character of "The Prisoner". Other note that 666 is also the apocalyptic number of "The Great Beast").

Different releases: Europe-on Hurdy Gurdy Records Cat. No. HG-1. The following different editions exists. **THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH BOXED SET LP:** original 1989 pressing with "intro" and "outro", made exclusively to band members 10 numbered copies in amazing hard box with black velvet folder hand written lyrics, various hand made artworks & inserts. Every copy has completely different inserts. **THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH gatefold cover** LP+printed inner sleeve. Original 1989 pressing with "Intro" and "Outro". 500 copies pressed: 150 copies distributed at live show, 350 destroyed. All copies include various inserts mostly hand made. Every copy has completely different inserts. **THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH gatefold cover LP reissue** released by the Devil Doll Fan Club: no "Intro", no "Outro"; slightly remixed; altered innersleeve. 500 copies only. **THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH+8** page booklet. U:S:A.-on Renaissance Records Cat. No..RCD-1008: **THE GIRL WHO WAS... DEATH CD.** Same booklet as 12 page European pressing/Picture CD.**THE GIRL WHO WAS.. DEATH** CD as part of a 4CD BOX in black silk pouch with free Devil Doll patch, sticker and12-page booklet with Devil Doll Chronology, exclusive photos and sheet music. Page 11 is hand written by Mr. Doctor (each copy has completely different words hand written). Limited edition 333 numbered copies. Picture CD. The first 30 boxes come in a cm. 32x17x13 black coffin and in velvet pouch (black or violet) instead of black silk pouch. Japan-On Belle Antique Records with Cat. No. MAR-95101. **THE GIRL WHO WAS.. DEATH** CD. This is the original European edition, but it comes with a second exclusive booklet and Japanese OBI.

ELIOGABALUS

First release:05/90 on Hurdy Gurdy Record Cat. No. HG-6 A CONCEPT BY MR. DOCTOR, LYRICS BY MR. DOCTOR, MUSIC BY MR. DOCTOR & EDOARTO BEATO, music arranged by MR. DOCTOR & DEVIL DOLL. Devil Doll: Mr. Doctor-Man of thousand voices/Organ/Piano/Celesta/Accordion, Edoardo Boato-Piano/Keyboards, Roberto Dani-Drums, Katia Giubbilei-Violin, Rick Bosco-Drums, Alberto Dorigo-Guitar, Bor Zuljan-Guitar with: Jurij Toni-Tuba, Paolo Zizich-Duet "The Mirror" with Mr. Doctor. The Devil Chorus: Conducted by Marian Bunic (Paolo Zizich/Marian Bunic/Polona Sever/Beti Robleck/Helena Pancur/Gregor Oblak/Jure Strencan/Borut Usenik/Valentina Blazinseck/Mr. Doctor). Recorded at the Tivoli Studios, Ljubljana, Slovenia. Mixed at Tivoli Studios, Produced by Mr. Doctor, Engineered by Juri Toni, Assistant Engineer: Borut Berden, Cover Concept: Mr. Doctor, Lettering: Mr. Doctor, Artwork. Zebrastudio, Photos: L. Desiderio, Films: G. Paolo Fallani. Tracks. Mr. Doctor... 20'30"; Eliogabalus... 24'40"

Different releases: Europe-on Hurdy Gurdy Records Cat. No. HG-6. The following different editions exist: **ELIOGABALUS BOXED SET LP:** made exclusively to band members 10 numbered copies in amazing hard box with black velvet folder hand written lyrics, various hand made artworks & inserts. **ELIOGABALUS GIMMIX LP** in "Theatre cover" with plastified insert promo only edition in 25 numbered copies including various hand made artwork & inserts. Every copy has completely different inserts. **ELIOGABALUS FAN CLUB gatefold LP** with "Devils cover" released by Devil Doll Fan Club: 900 numbered copies

only. **ELIOGABALUS LP THEATRE COVER** " estándar version" with printed inner sleeve. Note: the existence of rare white label test pressing copies of ELIOGABALUS with an early mixing/mastering made in march 1990 and rejected by Mr. Doctor is confirmed. **ELIOGABALUS CD THEATRE COVER** "estándar version" early pressings have 8-page booklet/later pressings include 12-page booklet (Note: the only album never released in Slovenja: all european copies have italian SAE red rubber stamp and "Made in Italy" written on the inlay card). **ELIOGABALUS CD VIOLIN PLAYERS COVER** made by the Italian Fan Club with a different 8-page booklet including also italian lyrics. Limited to 900 numbered copies. U.S.A.-on Remaissance Records with Cat. No. RCD-1009. **ELIOGABALUS CD** Same booklet as 12-page European pressing/Picture CD. **ELIOGABALUS CD** as part of 4CD Box in black silk pouch with free Devil Doll patch, sticker and 12-page booklet with Devil Doll chronology, exclusive photos and sheet music. Page 11 is hand-inscribed by Mr. Doctor (each copy has completely different words hand written). Limited edition 333 numbered copies. Picture CD. The first 30 boxes come into a cm 32x17x13 black coffin and have velvet pouch (black or violet) instead of the black silk pouch. Japan-on Belle Antique Records with Cat. No. MAR-95102. **ELIOGABALUS CD** this is the original European edition, but it comes with a second exclusive booklet and japanese OBI.

THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS

First release: 01/93 on Hurdy Gurdy Records Cat. No. HG-8. Original soundtrack to the film The Sacrilege of Fatal Arms written & directed by Mr. Doctor. A CONCEPT BY MR. DOCTOR, LYRICS BY MR. DOCTOR, MUSIC BY MR. DOCTOR. Music arranged and composed by MR. DOCTOR & DEVIL DOLL. Devil Doll: Mr. Doctor-Man of thousand voices, Francesco Carta-Piano, Roberto Dani-Drums, Sasha Olenjuk-Violin, Bor Zuljan-Guitar, Davor Klaric-Keyboards, Michel Fantini Jesurum-Pipe organ with: Damir Kamidoullin-Cello, Matej Kovacic-Accordion, Paolo Zizich-Duet "Talk Talk" with Mr. Doctor. Devil Chorus conducted by Marian Bunic (Paolo Zizich/Marian Bunic/Polona Sever/Beti Strencan/Breda Bunic/Gregor Oblak/Jure Strencan/Boris Kurent/Mojca Sojer/Mr. Doctor). Recorded at Tivoli Studios, Ljubljana, Slovenja. Church organ recorded at Tronovo Church, Ljubljana. Mixed at Tivoli Studios. Produced by Mr. Doctor, Jurij Toni & Rob Dani. Engineered by Jurij Toni. Assistant Engineer: Borut Berden. All cover concepts: Mr. Doctor. Lettering: Mr. Doctor. Artwork: Mr. Doctor. Films: G. Paolo Fallani. Tracks: The Sacrilege of Fatal Arms... 79'03"

Different releases: Europe-on Hurdy Gurdy Records with Cat.No. HG-8. The following different editions exist: **THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS BOXED SET double LP:** made exclusively to band members. 10 numbered copies in amazing hard box with black velvet folder hand written lyrics, various hand made artworks & inserts. Every copy has completely different inserts. **THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS double LP** withdraw before release: only handful of white label test pressings in proof sleeves exist. **THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS CD 1st** release 1993. 900 copies distributed through the Devil Doll Fan Club includes 12 page booklet with Devil Chair/Mr. Doctor on cover. **THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS CD** re-release 1996: Picture CD with completely different 12 page booklet whose cover reproduces proof sleeve made by Mr. Doctor for the withdraw double LP (Note: a few hundred copies released also in Slovenja. Slovenian copies do not have the SIAE rubber stamp on the inlay card). U.S.A.-on Renaissance Records with Cat. No. RCD-1011: **THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS CD.** Picture CD (different from 1996 european pressing) and 12 page booklet with unique front sleeve. **THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS CD** as a part of a 4 CD Box in black silk pouch with free Devil Doll patch, sticker and 12 page booklet with Devil Doll Chronology, exclusive photos and sheet music. Page 11 is hand-inscribed by Mr. Doctor (each copy had completely different words hand written). Limited edition 333 copies numbered copies. Picture CD. The first 30 boxes come in a cm. 32x17x13 black coffin an in velvet pouch (black or violet) instead of black silk pouch. THE SACRILEGE OF FATAL ARMS: Same lyrics as SACRILEGIUM with over 30 minutes of extra music exclusive to the soundtrack album.

DIES IRAE

First release: 02/96 on Hurdy Gurdy Records Cat. No. HG-10. A CONCEPT BY MR. DOCTOR inspired by: the life and music of George Harvey Bone, the poems of Edgard Allan Poe, Emily Bronte & Emili Dickinson, Isadore Ducasse. LYRICS BY MR. DOCTOR, MUSIC BY MR. DOCTOR & FRANCESCO CARTA. Music arranged by Mr. Doctor &Francesco Carta. Orchestrations by Mr. Doctor, Francesco Carta., Sasha Olenjuk. Devil Doll: Mr. Doctor- Man of thousand voices, Francesco Carta- Piano., Sasha Olenjuk-Violin, Roman Ratej-Drums, Bor Zuljan-Guitar, Jani Hace-Bass, Davor Klaric-Keyboards, Michel Fantini Jesurum-Pipe Organ with. Norina Radovan-Soprano, Drago-Accordion, Paolo Zizich-Backing Vox, Gloria Chorus conducted by Marian Bunic and The Slovenian Philarmonic Orchestra. Soloists: Igor Skerianec-Cello, Irina Kevorkova-2nd violins leader, Fraim Gashi-Double Bass. Recorded at various locations. Mixed. Akademic Studios. Produced by Mr. Doctor and Jurij Toni. Cover Concept: Mr. Doctor. Lettering: Mr. Doctor. Artwork: Rossana Pistolato & Andrea Buffolo. Photos: Andrea Buffolo & Sergio Sutto. Films: G. Paolo Fallani. Pipe organ recorded by Ermanno Velludo. Tracks: DIES IRAE... 45'53"

Different releases: Europe-on Hurdy Gurdy Records Cat. No. HG-10. The following editions exist. **DIES IRAE BOXED SET LP** Made exclusively to band members10 numbered copies in amazing hard box with black velvet folder hand written lyrics, various hand made artworks & inserts. Every copy has completely different inserts. **DIES IRAE CIMMIX LP** in two pocket gatefold cover with plastified insert promo only edition in 25 numbered copies including various hand made artworks & inserts. **DIES IRAE DEVIL DOLL FAN CLUB gatefold LP** released by the Devil Doll Fan Club: 350 copies only. **DIES IRAE CD "Mr. Doctor's face"** on cover. **DIES IRAE "Death triumphant"** on cover (Note: "Death" cover was originally exclusive to the Slovenian pressing. The Slovenian copies do not have the red rubber stamp on the inlay card) Excerpts from **DIES IRAE** (different edit) included in the promo compilation B.R.S. Akademik Snemalni Studio CD, Cat. No. Made and distributed only in Slovenja. On Hurdy Gurdy Records Cat. No. HG-9. **THE DAY OF WRATH/DIES IRAE- THE LOST TAPES.** Cassette only release in special package. Made in Slovenja and never released: 10 copies only seem to exist, given to Devil Doll members by Mr. Doctor as a present on New Year's Eve 1994. The package includes: 1) Parts of the ill-fated Tivoli recordings that survived on a tape before the fire 2) A luxury book made by Mr. Doctor with all the original sheet music to The Day of the Wrath/Dies Irae (some yet unreleased) 3) Some of the hand made Masks used by Mr. Doctor in Devil Doll's performances '87/'94. Japan- on Belle Antique Records with Cat. No. MAR-95150: DIES IRAE CD. This is the original European edition, but it comes with a second exclusive booklet and Japanese OBI.

Did you buy my previous Exstinctio Sensus #2? If yes, maybe you still remember a formulaic interview with the editor of Einherjum magazine. If not, errrr,, you've got this issue on your hands and that's what counts. After a sucessful first editon, Odinn's back on the road, but now under MIMES BRUNN. Despise one year of lack of mutual correspondence, Odinn sent me a copy sometime during the last months of his "journalistic-course" in Emgland. I spent all thy dull day reading it, even when catching the bus, in the lunch-time at my job, toilett, etc. Once you've devoured its first page, you cannot stop until the very last word. Don't miss such uncomfortable interviews (Bishop of Hexen, Demoniac, Primordial, Isten,...), hilarious non-musical articles ("Mother Teresa-Total nunsense?", "Homosexual christians",...) and don't forget also morgant reviews. Mimes Brunn contains all the ingredients that I totally appreciate. It's a real pleasure to find independent and personal works (far away of adverstising-rates). OK, I'll let Odinn speak about The Arcane and The Profane.

What motivates you to continue in taking part of the "scene"? Do you consider yourself like a medicine for this ailing...? What aspects of the "business" stimulate or make you puke?

—"I don't need much motivation. The day I need motivation, I'll rather quit. I enjoy making the magazine, corresponding with people, so that in itself is excellent and good training. Corresponding can be a marathon, though... I am not here to support the scene, so the "ailing" of it is none of my concerns. If you say that it is ailing, it means that it was very healthy before. I don't think so. It's like old people who keep saying that "everything was better during the war" just because there have been some changes in how things are done. As of now at least, I think everything is basically OK. I am doing this because I like it, just like I can eat a good dinner and have sex without much motivation.For me it is OK, since I have the chance to vent my feelings. If I don't like something, I can write about it, and perhaps make people change their minds. It's obviously different for people who are not able to do that. Even the things I attack hardest in Mimes Brunn are not things that I go around worrying myself about. Some sort of writing therapy I suppose. I feel much better after having written something harsh. Even so good I can allow myself to scrap it.I think all people with a sense of sarcastic humour are medicine anywhere. It stimulates when things go good for me, when I get to hear that something cool has happened, when I read some good 'zines and hear good music. I like that the underground is in fact not a static environment. As some of the fed up 27-year-olds go out, wide-eyed 17-year-olds enter. This is good and bad of course, but at least it prevents the underground from being a place where nothing has changed the last 5 years.I don't know what make me puke. I have a hard stomach. There are times when things don't go as planned. In that case, what perhaps motivates me is the knowledge that what I am doing has some impact. I knew before anything was released that people who were going to read Mimes Brunn would be amused (or at least pissed off). Not many people write to me and say: "I really liked your magazine because it was very professional, and I liked many of the bands!". Feedback like that is worse than negative feedback".

Your counterpart (Aasmund) seems to be now totally isolated of the underground.. Why did he loose all interest? His Black Tower Productions finally laid on ice. (He was supposed to release Covenant and Kampfar albums: Coincidentally both bands are nowadays at the top).

—"Aasmund met a lot of obstacles back home. I have no problems understanding that it became too much, although it would have been more convenient for everyone if he had let out information on an earlier stage. Still, I do not think that it is OK to spread rumours about him being a dead drug addict. In fact, I know that he got very pissed off when one former signee phoned up and told him to spend as much money as possible on drugs. It's not the smartest thing to do when you want back some recordings, is it? Anyway, I have met him several times the last years, and he's more than fit, as usual and Necropolis Records ("All hail to our new king") keep sending him promo CDs".I still remember that Mimes Brunn was also the name of one of those articles in Norwegian, right...? And you even planned to start a political party. For obvious reasons, there was finally nothing concrete. I'm so curious to read some propaganda of your idealistic party…

—"Yes, that party thing was luckily laid to rest. There is no need for yet another minor political party, and I am too individualistic to at all bother with it. I much rather prefer to speak for myself, than for a lot of people. I can't see anything else than that we would have been lumped in with all the righting parties. I don't like righting parties more than I like left-wing parties, and if you're lumped in with the righting parties you become a social outcast at the same time. Some way to achieve things, or what? This does not mean I've lost interest in the ideas, but going the party-political way is not going to change anything.When that is said, political parties are needed, like factories are needed. Important, but I wouldn't like to be a part of it. Average people seem to have contempt for politicians, but they have only themselves to thank. Even the most narrow-minded idiot will say that "politicians are only idiots". If people in general tried to shape up and discuss politics intelligently, then naturally the politicians (who obviously derive from the people) would be better equipped to help run the country. This will never happen, so none can prove me wrong".

> "... A lot of people are afraid to ask "difficult" questions. They feel perhaps that they should not ask such questions to the nice interviewee who offers his valuable time to answer questions. They consider themselves to be inferior and 100% dependent on the bands they interview. It is nothing but lack of self-respect "

The main difference (in between you and other 'zine editors) is that you are not taking this as just a hobby. In fact, you're studying to become a "reputed" journalist. What do you find attractive of journalism? In what extent doing interviews, articles... affect your creative vibes?

—"Probably what I find attractive with journalism is that it's such a varied occupation. You learn a lot all the time, and you have a lot of choice when it comes to what to work with. I also like to write too, so for me it's excellent. In fact, so far I look upon it as more fun than work actually. If it's a boring case, then at least you are able to write about it in a sarcastic way. Still, I think it's very important to move around. If you are journalist in the same paper/magazine for twenty years, then I think you have become bored with the same old problems. As a result, you stiffen, and your writing stiffens to - you start boring people. I hope I won't be seen writing for the same publication for more than 5-7 years at least.One thing is for sure, you won't find me doing music journalism. I can perfectly do the odd interview, but I am not going to fuck around interviewing musicians the rest of my life. That would mean interviewing bands that sell good — not bands whose music I like personally. I mean, how could it be that several magazine earlier known as metal magazines write about The Prodigy etc? It's because they sell very good, and because they know that a lot of Metallers like their music. It's not because it's good Metal, at least. These Metallers can read about Prodigy everywhere else.It's not music journalism, it's music industry. The magazines are dependent on advertising, so they will naturally listen to the labels that offer money for advertising. I can't see that any underground label, reluctant to spend money on advertising in a magazine would get a lot of good coverage in that same magazine. I can give you one interesting example: Shagrath of Dimmu Borgir owns Hot Records. Hot Records advertises in Terrorizer. The editor of Terrorizer interviews Dimmu Borgir(and mentions that Hot R. owes Terrorizer money...). I don't say that it's unnatural to interview Dimmu Borgir, just that this is Business As Usual, just like your average Women's Weekly gossip magazine. They were not interviewed the same way, say, politicians are (where interviews can be negative). Music journalism is too fucking cosy!Besides, I'm too attached to it, to offer some sort of objective/friendly interview with any up and coming band. I would have to say to an editor wanting me to interview some band: "I can't interview them, because I don't like their music", "They are a bunch of idiots", "They just surfed the wave and didn't deserve the record deal they got" etc. Fat chance I would survive long in music journalism. Freelancer, maybe, nothing else.Back to general journalism, I have to be able to get my stuff published, or else will stop writing. Therefore, it affects my creativity very much".

According to your comments, you're not very satisfied with your English education. It lacks of...

—"Yes, that's right. I have probably mentioned this hundred times now, but some of the school's priorities are, to put it mildly, idi-

otic. Well, it's not just the school's priorities. You have the NCTJ - National Council for Training of Journalists. It's an organisation which oversees that the subjects taught at schools are fitting. This means we were taught shorthand (stenography) 6 hours a week, because of a widespread fear of recorders. Fair enough, you can't use recorders in Court, but that's about the only place. Normally, regular notetaking is more than enough. You don't need to be able to scratch down 100 words a minute just to get the facts about a fire, do you? It belongs to the story that I was the best in my class in that subject in the beginning, before I got pissed off when I understood how much time you must waste learning it. Above all, you can't use English shorthand in Norway, since our sounds are different. Still, we had to attend shorthand classes for a year. I could have learnt proper German during that time.We learnt "layout". Layout means in this respect using old 386s/486s with old layout programmes not able to import even Word 2.0 documents! There was no scanner obviously. In fact, just before I quit, we were served copied photos, scissors and glue. We did not learn photo. In Norway, journalists don't usually do layout, but all are supposed to be able to take photos. The radio studio was in mono.We did not learn any interview technique. At least I did not learn anything new. One should believe that is one thing a journalism course would focus on.Part of our education was to write short wedding reports. Who married who, what dress the bride wore and who the fuck was the priest. You don't fucking waste my time with that. I don't say that it is a waste of time to write it in some papers (if the readers are morons), but it is a waste of time to learn it. It's so bloody straight forward, that anyone who can not do that after a minute's introduction from the editor must be mentally handicapped. One teacher claimed that the Sun is a good paper, "because it sells good". I was in general disappointed at the attitude towards tabloids, and I had expected professionals to be negative towards them. Alas not. They see the tabloids as the last rope for uneducated people to get a grasp of what's happening. I would rather say that those tabloids are making people worse off mentally. I mean, it obviously affects you if you every day read a paper with an extremely simplistic world view. The head of Sociology department at the school, Dr Tony Chapman once said to us in full class: "I am afraid to say so, but none of you will ever work in a broadsheet". What he meant was that the journalism school was not good enough for us to become, say, journalists in the Daily Telegraph, but that, obviously, we could work for the Sun.Apparently, the school receives a lot of money from the state per student. The money has meant to be used for updating the equipment; computers, radio, video etc. Alas, our dear principal has spent the money on himself - diplomas in other countries. He has also spent a lot of money on flowers, since Prince Andrew happened to come by. The journalism school is a franchise, so when the University got to hear about this waste of money, they put the knife to that principal's throat and told him to close down the course, or they would go public. The course will therefore be closed down in two years, and the University will start their own course. That's the end of Britain's first journalism school.Well, there's a lot of other stupid details, but these are the most grave I feel.There was an article about the course being closed down in the local/regional paper The Northern Echo. Guess who had written it? A student from the course! I am sure he didn't think of his grades when writing that article!!

Still, it has been positive to stay in England. That sort of knowledge can not be underestimated. It's quite likely that I might go back there some day - just not to study".

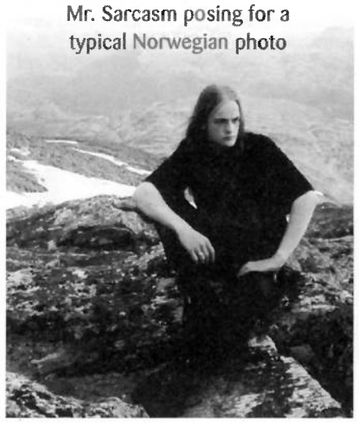
Since you're starting at the University in Oslo...What do you expect of this new period back to your country. Is the English system so far away...?

—"I prefer not to have expectations right now. I just want to learn important things, to get decent background for my later career. The course I will take is about how the State is run, and that will be quite interesting.At the university there will be more intelligent people than in Darlington. Journalist students who have never heard of the Boer War? Plasma".

What's the balance of your personal experiences (as a foreign student)? What about the Sesame-Sesame effect in Norway?

—"On balance, it has been positive. Not the school, but I have learnt a lot about Britain, and about how Norway is comparatively. In Norway, we are told how we are compared to other countries, and how foreigners views us. Now I got to see how it

Mr. Sarcasm posing for a typical Norwegian photo



really is. One thing I found interesting was to read reports Norwegian correspondents wrote from England. It was pretty obvious that they took some of the week's papers, and wrote a compressed version which they sent back home. Most certainly, they did not dig up anything themselves. To be a correspondent in England therefore seems to mean; go out in the morning, buy some newspapers and news magazines and read them at a café or pub. Go back to your flat. Repeat this a few days before you send a summary to Norway. Always speak of English people as a very homogeneous group; They all miss Diana. They all think the royals are out of touch. They all love Tony Blair. Well, they do support Tony Blair, but so would you if you knew the alternatives. In fact, I would enjoy being correspondent in London.As for the school's Sesame-Sesame effect, I can't see anything else than that it will diminish once people hear the course is being closed down because of its Sesame Street resemblance".

Your recollections of Darlington... Which of them would you point out? Have they contributed to enrich your personality?

—"The most annoying thing about Darlington is that the people there are very narrow-minded. For instance, they think that if you have long hair, then you are a homosexual. (I would suspect that most homosexuals have short hair.) Anyway, it was somewhat irritating that they made a lot of hassle about it. I was regularly shouted at, although I was never in physical trouble - unlike my fellow shorthaired classmates... There were never any problems with being Norwegian, though.Anyway, Britain is a very diverse country, so I would like to point out that my ill-will has got to do with Darlington - not Britain.The name Darlington is also extremely idiotic, don't you think so???".

I can easily imagine the general feedback of Mimes Brunn. On the other hand, negative comments are also part of the game. What are the conclusions of those "destructive" words? Do they make you feel even stronger? How do you see all the "professional layout" stuff?

—"The layout has been criticised for being a bit too messy. This is a fair enough point. However, I must stress that Mimes Brunn has not been about making a glossy slick magazine. The first underground magazine I ever read was Sadistic Noise #3. It was chaotic, with all sorts of illustrations, quotes etc. The second was COTIM #2, which wasn't exactly the same, but it was also quite chaotic. I think that has formed the way I look upon the layout of underground magazines. I want to be able to discover new things on a page - not just two-three columns with a background photo. I liked Twin Sister better than Mädchen too. Mädchen demanded respect, while I simply liked Twin Sister.Timo of Davthvs manages very well to combine my idea of good layout and making it look professional at the same time. It is diverse, but at the same time extremely tasteful. In addition, the words-per-page ratio is quite high. In fact, Davthvs is the only underground magazine I think has professional layout. You will have to see it for yourself if you want to know what I'm talking about. All other underground magazines who write that their layout is "professional" are wrong.(With the possible exception of Descent, since I haven't read it for a while). Professional means a lot more than just boring. The result is that I am not bothered with the layout, although I want to have a concept next time. I must progress, yes, but it will not be in the spirit of Albert Speer.Except from that, the criticism has been that the underground do not deserve a genius like me, that the price is too low for the scum and so on.

What's the importance of doing some critical questions and having a personal style of writing? Don't you think that there's a static and comfortable editorial line in a big percentage of 'zines, magazines... circulating out there?

—"I think a lot of people are afraid to ask "difficult" questions. They feel perhaps that they should not ask such questions to the nice interviewee who offers his valuable time to answer questions. They consider themselves to be inferior and 100% dependent on the bands they interview. It is nothing, but lack of self-respect. Other times, it may be that they don't know enough about the interviewee to find interesting questions. In other words, they have not done their homework. Last, there has never been a tradition for such questions. I mean, people still use this "Support the underground" slogan. It's like you have to be careful, or else the underground will cease to exist. Most people must have realised that when I and Skuggen started up Einherjum, we didn't exactly feel inferior. Our attitude was, and still is; the bands need us as much as we need them. When I interview someone, this is good for us all. If they can answer my critical questions in a good

"... the criticism has been that the underground do not deserve a genius like me, that the price is too low for the scum and so on"

way, they will appear intelligent. If they can't answer the questions properly, they will look stupid. As far as I'm concerned, such questions are a golden opportunity to any interviewee. Perhaps the most important thing is that it makes the interview come alive. It makes good reading, and the guy you interview will reveal more than the standard shit he usually lets out.A good writing style is indeed very positive, but to ask the right questions is more important. You must be a very good writer to hide bullshit. By this I certainly don't mean to have an excellent grasp of grammar and know 100 English expressions and idioms. Good writing is more than writing correct and sensible. It's about not writing clichés. For instance, I hate people who use well-known idioms as they are and make a big point out of them that way. A good writer uses idioms, expressions, historical events as background, or to play with. Anyway, if your mind is stiffened, then idioms just make you look more helpless since you will then use the most common ones. Isten is particularly brilliant in that respect, a lot due to the underlying sarcasm. Fuck, I even admire their punctuation!".

It's noteworthy one of those flyers which announced Mimes Brunn. I mean; the one showing a letter from an offended lad called Christopher James Adamsson. Are you really a martyr of our cause (the decline of our actual society)? Do you have such a destructive attitude? Are you still in league with Satan? Did you finally return the funds he spent on Mimes Brunn?

—"I am not a martyr. I just think that we should live together in peace, because that's what everyone wants, right? If we could all agree, it would be much better for all of us and the earth. Too many people are egoistical and selfish, such as those who do not agree with sensible people. I do not say that I am always right, just that people who oppose what I say should reconsider their negative and oppressive behaviour (towards the community). Donald Duck are fuckheads. Reindeer steak is not very good, but it'll do".

You wrote in the foreword: "Mimes Brunn is a mixture of music, polemics, sarcasm, humour and critical journalism". I'd add that Mimes Brunn is also uncompromising, antidogmatic, non-conformist... Some wise words to corroborate this please.

—"If the result looks uncompromising, then of course that's good. However, Mimes Brunn is not a manifest with some kind of goal, therefore, there is no programme to compromise. Anyway, I suppose you mean that I do not act as a lame 12-members' committee who can not do anything because the committee ombudsman has taken a pre-mature paternity leave. Yes. Since I am the only editor, I haven't had to listen to others more than for their opinions. I am sure that if I were co-operating with someone, then there would be compromises. I would like to remind everyone that not being able to compromise is not necessarily a strength. I just depends on what kind of compromises you come up with.Antidogmatic sounds too dogmatic for me. Un-/non-dogmatic sounds better. As you probably know, "anti-" is often used in highly dogmatic connections: antifascists, antiantifascists and Antichrist (the christian fantasy figure). I hope the list goes on, since this is early in the morning. Non-conformist, yes perhaps. I hold individualism very high. We all conform to some degree, but at least Mimes Brunn is not made to conform to anything particular. There is no ideological line it conforms to, except from my current mood. Usually, people who call themselves Non-conformist conform a lot to something extreme. The words you mentioned are too "angry". This does obviously not mean that I am a soft person, just that being "angry" to me is some sort of naivety. It's a silly way of being negative, like the bulls are angry at the matadors. It doesn't do them much good, does it? Although the words you mentioned in a way fit Mimes Brunn they don't really fit either. If I saw a flyer advertising like that, I would figure it was an extreme righting publication; dogmatic and conformist".

What does incoherence mean for you (in a wide meaning of the word)? Is it a never ending source of inspiration? In the end... isn't it a bottomless pit?

—"I can't exactly say what it means to me, except from that it is a never ending source of inspiration. It is something to go at in statements, thus it undermines a lot of what someone has said. The more dogmatic you are, the more susceptible you are to the effects of incoherence. This is probably the biggest problems of christian belief. There are so many incoherent (i.e. selfcontradicting) parts in the bible that it's simply impossible to live by it. With its widespread popularity, it means that there's a lot of inspiration around. Anyway, it is a bottomless pit. As long as people come up with opinions, there will always be incoherence. A problem however, that what some people see as incoherent is not necessarily incoherent. You may not have understood the opinion from first of, and are therefore not capable of understanding what contradicts the same opinion. You find this a lot in politics, probably used tactically. By alleging that a somewhat complex reform is incoherent by using some examples, you win points since not everyone has the time to read about it and understand it. Take something as simple as immigration. In the late 60s, Norway(and many other countries) started to import immigrants since we needed their labour. Now, however, we are not really interested. To some people this may be incoherent and shallow in a way. From the egoist point of view (which left-wingers deny) it is ultracoherent. We needed milk yesterday, but we don't need milk today. There is more than enough in the fridge, and it is getting sour.Except from that, you could of course say that as all Norwegian political parties (except from the most radical socialist parties) are based upon the christian belief in their manifesto, then refusing to accept a single immigrant is incoherent. In fact everything will be incoherent".

Your new article about Dead, Euronymous and Varg Vikernes has become one of the strongest points in Mimes Brunn; an amusing and elaborated document, indeed. Tell us a bit about the reactions concerning "Underground Heroes". There's a certain aspect of Varg's personality you find interesting, right?

—"Well, so far the reactions to that article have only been positive. I obviously don't know how they feel those who haven't written back yet. People who are insulted by it will obviously be mocked in a most uncompromising way, unless they happen to be close friends or family of the implicated. The interesting aspect of Varg's personality is that he's a clown. Make no mistake. He has managed to piss off 90% of Norway and I think that is quite an achievement. Except from that, he's incoherence personified, thus as stated above, he's an endless source of inspiration. I must see to read that book of his (it's a shame I haven't read it yet, not to mention reviewed it). I am sure it will be entertaining. Whereas Euronymous and Dead are dead, Varg is still alive and changing his opinions when at the hairdresser. That is, every day".

Do you feel totally pleased being the only editor in Mimes Brunn? Is it impossible to find someone using the intellect in the same level?

—"It would be extremely arrogant by me to say that it is impossible to find someone using the intellect the way I do. However, I do not search for anyone. Contributors are OK, of course, but not co-editors anymore. You spend too much time discussing things. Although I like discussions, it's different when you make a magazine like this. You are too connected to it. I felt the same way when I played in bands, since I always hated some of the riffs others made. Therefore, when I found myself on stage, playing what I considered a cheap, vulgar riff, it was embarrassing. With Einherjum, it was OK, since I and Aasmund did our different things, and usually agreed how our profile should be. Except from that, it's evident that as I was the one who typed things in, did the layout and so on, I in fact got the last word. I don't say that was the absolute best thing, but I don't think it would have been good if we were to discuss every single word in that magazine. That was more or less what happened in Folkefienden. The discussions were mostly fruitful, but also exhaustive. A co-operation like Folkefienden is therefore out of the question.My experience from playing in bands says the same. If one guy is the boss, then fine. If it's just a bunch of people who contribute unequally, and when they contribute with riffs I hate... It pisses me off. Friendships became somewhat strained I remember".

Anyway, some collaborations have been included in this issue. Are they used with the intention of providing a new dimension of your journalistic work? Are they a "cool" complement?

—"Well, I wouldn't say that they provide a new dimension of my journalistic work... Anyway, I am glad that they are enclosed, since they provide variation in the way interviews are done. In a magazine as brim filled as Mimes Brunn, it could be stressing if my voice were the only one to be heard. However, Mimes Brunn will never be a magazine with lots of contributed interviews. The contributed interviews this time are more of a coincidence. Russ Smith offered me the interviews with Tom Warrior and Bishop Of Hexen, and knowing his capabilities, it wasn't difficult to accept. Sarcana offered me an interview with Primordial, and since I knew that she had done some research, that wasn't difficult either. She wanted to do another one, so I thought Paradigma would be good since I had a deal with them that they were to be included. At that time, I already had done an interview, but that went the other way in the FF settlement. Since I hate to do things over again, I figured her contribution would be positive, which it was. For all the interviews, it is necessary to say that I was desperate to get finished, so indeed, I was grateful for the contribution. Usually, I am a hard-line DIY".

You've used much space to deride magazines like Imhotep, Nordic Vision and Slayer (special mention to Roy Kristensen)... Why don't you consider them elite? Why are you so obsessed by destroying Roy's reputation? (I'm not an admirer of his work, I just wonder.)

—"I didn't really deride Slayer, except from that I thought it´s extremely stupid to employ Roy. By the way, I should mention that Roy's contribution to Slayer 11 is rather cryptic. I haven't read it yet, but some people have written back to tell me that they can't find his contribution anywhere. Well, he has contributed according to himself, he wrote so to me, and Metalion said so (according to one very reliable source). Slayer has been a good magazine, although not what it has been cracked up to.
I haven't read Nordic Vision much since #2. That's when I saw that some of the "professionally printed" pages were impossible to read. You could say that I should read it to at all have an opinion about it. I don't think I need to, but anyway, my opinions are few and negative.Imhotep #3 was a disaster. The reason why I bothered was because of the not very ironic boasting of being in-depth and so on. I do not at all try to destroy Roy's reputation. I just try to destroy attempts to call drivel "in-depth". I mean, there are obviously worse 'zines out there, but very few go to such lengths as him in appearing analytical and at the same time spew out such nonsense. Roy however, is unrepentant and admits he is a very positive person. He said that if he would be interviewing me in-depth, he would be focusing on the positive aspects of Mimes Brunn. No matter who performs this type of journalism, it must stop. It's not like I want every 'zine to be a full scale war, but I don't want any more of these housewife discussions. Anyway, I won't spend the rest of the year discussing Imhotep. I'm highly bored with the subject. Rather read the one page analysis of Imhotep #3 in Mimes Brunn. By the way, I will be included in Imhotep #5, I get to buy Slayer 11 from him at a very nice price, he compliments my interesting letters which are, to put it mildly, negative. Even Jesus Christ would admire Roy's ability to turn the other cheek".

Your interview with Bælder turned out to be quite stimulating. In which extent do you agree/disagree with some of their approaches?

—"This is difficult to say without appearing like a backstabber. I disagree a lot, probably. At least, what I positively agree with them about is very little. OK, so none of us like christianity, but the most important thing is of course what to replace it with. I think it is impossible to find a set of ideology to replace christianity(or the way it is practised). By this, I obviously don't mean that it is the least of evils, just that I am always sceptical to "new orders". I am not so sure that Bælder's idea of a perfect society is mine too. You must remember that we're brought up with this thing around us, just like we're brought up with rain falling from the sky. Rain can sometimes be a problem, but at least we're used to it.You could say that I am somewhat Conservative. I believe that change is good, yes, but not too abrupt".

Do you follow a specific method to elaborate the interviews? What kind of reactions do you want to provoke on those who answer your questionnaires?

—"I do my research, and find some interesting subjects. It is what everyone does (I hope). What makes the interviews different is the personality of the interviewer; what he or she thinks is interesting. Also, how well you do your research matters of course.
I don't want to provoke boredom at least. Except from that, it can be anything. As long as it's good reading, and therefore intrigues the readers, then I am pleased".

How much money did the government of your country pay for the guide to Norway? Are you interested in visiting a country whose bands you consider them elite? Don't you think that the Norwegian fever was an exceptional case?

—"Unfortunately the government didn't pay me much for that guide. You're right, Norway is an exceptional case. Part of the success of Norwegian bands stems from the fact that they have incorporated Norwegian nature/history as part of the image. There are therefore two reasons why people come to Norway; Black Metal and Nature/History. Maybe that is three. I might visit a country with lots of BM bands if I knew lots of people in the country. That would then obviously be a more socializing visit. I don't know where the hell I want to go next. Right now I am just glad to be back in Norway".

The back cover of M.B. shows a 1999 calendar: "Maybe the last year of mankind as we know it". Does this wonderful world truly deserve a total holocaust? Do you have in mind how will be our beloved race in the very beginning of the next century?

—"That phrase is a bit of a joke. Just a pisstake against all those Nostradamus fans. I thought it sounded a bit more clean than "Get Ready for Holocaust!", "You will not wake up in 2000..." and "Stop buying them Lotto coupons!". Anyway, each day is the last day of mankind as we know it. Geddit? The beginning of the next century starts in 2 years. I think it will be much the same as now, only we will have better computers. As for the people, I don't know. I was desperate for some reading today, so I bought Kerrang! I feel very alienated by it in fact. Judging by Kerrang! people will become even more stupid and senseless. Drug using, all-fucking, non-reading, easy listening, TV watching... Honestly, I don't want to think about how mankind might turn out to be. Most of them can fuck off. Only if they do, it will affect the economy".

How's the process in Norway to become an apostate? I cannot understand why the Norwegian church have now restored your membership... (If they ever let you out in the first place).

—"It's fairly easy to get out (I think). You send a letter to your local congregation telling them to fuck off, and enclose copy of your baptism certificate. Voila you're out! I couldn't find my certificate last time, so I am sure they figured it was unwise to do as I told them to. Is there any sense in an atheist taking good care of a baptism certificate?However, now and then, the membership records of the State church fucks up. They blame this on lack of funds, naturally. What happens then is that they make EVERYONE in Norway who were baptised as kids members again, unless they are members of other faiths or are "humanists" (basically atheists with a christian view of life). This, because they then use their membership lists to sort out those who are not supposed to be members of the church. The discerning reader will understand that I am not a muslim nor a humanist. This makes me a perfectly good member of Our State Church. Whether I am out or in, I still have to pay tax for it!! Again, unless I am a muslim or humanist. It's a wonderful world. It is simply impossible to avoid paying tax for religion in Norway".

If you had the chance to work for several serious newspapers... Which of them would you choose? Would they fit perfectly to your style?.

—"I don't know which I would choose. It would depend much on the actual job, and freedom, I was offered. Besides, I don't want to work for the same paper/magazine for ten years anyway. No papers will fit perfectly to my style. Only Mimes Brunn fits perfectly to my style!".

Urmmm... You're showing T-shirts in one of the Black Tears mail-order catalogue. Why don't you work as a fashion model instead? Do you crave for fame, money, sex...?

—"The reason why I don't work as a fashion model is that no-one has discovered me yet. If I was promised a suitable amount to show some fucking clothes for a short while, then of course! I would not have wanted it as a career of course. "Famous" is a very empty word. "Infamous" is a lot better. I crave for both money and sex, but I won't do all sorts of things to get it".

That's all for now. I won't take you anymore of your time with these incredibly silly questions...

—"These were not silly at all - thanks a lot for this opportunity to distort the minds of your readers! The interview was first answered while in England. Then, I left for Norway and sent the computer by boat. Unfortunately, I forgot to copy the interview onto a disk and put that in my pocket. Well, as I was back in Norway, I noticed that my parcels, including the computer, had not arrived yet. I figured it could take some time. Therefore, I started to answer the interview from the beginning, on my old computer here

"The interesting aspect of Varg´s personality is that he´s a clown... he´s incoherence personified... he´s an endless source of inspiration"

in Oslo. I rang up the transport company, which informed me that my parcels were now in Stavanger. I said "OK, but it would be nice to get them to Oslo". Several different companies were involved in transporting my goods, and it is evident that their communication was not the best.Anyway, I had to leave Oslo, since I was going to work for a paper in Hordaland. During that time, I did manage to get finished with this interview, although very slow. Then, one day, my mother rang me up. The parcels had arrived to the office of one of the transport companies here in Oslo. Unfortunately, they had opened up one of the boxes with the magazines in. And my were they shocked. One of the drivers in that company actually refused to deliver the parcels. After a while, however, they concluded that it was not as bad as they had first thought. But, as they said to my mother on the phone: "It could be the start of something. If it had been worse, we would have gone to the police."

1. It was illegal to open the parcels for them, as they were not custom officers.
2. It was illegal to speak to my mother about my parcels, since I am above 18. I am 23 in fact, but unfortunately, it didn't say on the parcels. They are not allowed to speak to anyone about what is in anyone else's parcels.
3. It should be illegal to harass the parents of hardened thought-criminals like myself.
4. A guy who refuses to drive parcels, with contents which he does not like, should not work for a transport company.
5. In fact, they should all fuck off.

"Linjegods" is the name of the transport company, and everyone should boycott them.

Anyway, when I arrived back in Oslo, I had forgotten to bring with me the finished interview. Therefore, I had to start again, now with the interview I had done while in England, and excerpts from the second attempt. Fascinating, or what?Mimes Brunn is available for 50NOK, 7USD, 5GBP Europe, 8USD World".

Only when we can say what part us we can discover what unites us. Dreams –ever so often dreams keep us away from reality, from everyday life with its light and shadows. On the other hand, dreams can actually take up the daily routine perfectly smooth- in dreams we often project desires and fears. – "Let's fly away on the tender wings of sadness into the realm of forgotten hope against dismay against the loss of gladness in favour of new ways to go"

What's **THE GALLERY** supposed to mean? Is it something distant in our daily lives?

—"**THE GALLERY** is an exhibition of all our thoughts and feels. It's a personal valve of emotions, a performance of our visions it connects reality with fantasy. And for us it's also important that the sound reflects the feeling: warmth, sensation, depth, and sense"

There's a special relationship in **THE GALLERY**(members know each other since childhood). Has it been more beneficial in order to create a relaxed sphere of activity? Does the band operate as a perfect symbiosis?

—"Well, actually it does. For sure there are different opinions, different tastes but that's it what brings us great ideas. Everyone involves his part- that makes the symbiosis perfect".

I've read a slight reference about your home-town (Aue)... " with its surroundings of sickening story". I'd like to know some details about that place, please.

—"Aue is kind of a sleepy town. Many people here are resonating about their problems or about other problems. They have their families, big cars and pretend to be happy- it's disgusting! Young people in this area are at dissolution's mercy. There are no clubs, cafes, discos- they hang around, get violent an nobody talks about it...- main thing, the surface got no scratch. We know that this isn't a single case at all, but a very good reason for us five guys to meet and play music".

A swan is picked out with the intention to be a part of T.G. image. What does it represent?

—"In our opinion the swan represents the touch of dreamscapes- a symbol of grace, you know. This animal stands for beauty and elegance. When this what your ears can hear should be related to what your eyes can see, then the swan is a good thing to handle that. We think the swan is the symbol of dreamscapes, exclusively. Actually the next CD will get another feeling – so it will get its own symbol. Just be surprised!"

Do you think that your country still has the potential to present more and more excellent bands? You have been playing a lot of single-gigs... Have any newcomers caught your attention?

—"I think these days a lot of new bands are born. And I think there are a lot of good and a lot bad bands. In fact a lot of terrible bands with a very low musical standard are signed and a lot of high-quality combos still have no contract yet. That's a pity. But during the last months I got the impression by the press that quality will survive. I hope I'm right- I don't like music without melody".

THE GALLERY published a self-financed MCD right before first contacts with Hall of Sermon. Convey us the most noteworthy aspects of "A voyage into the infinity".

—"It's funny that you put this question to us. A lot of your writing colleagues put this question to us, too. Back to the theme: We recorded six songs with a total playing time of 30 minutes. We it wasn't mastered we sent a tape with the recordings to the Lacrimosa/Zillo contest and won the place. But before we could get informed about winning the contest we pressed the mini-CD. It's been a 500 edition. The production wasn't good enough for a world-wide releasing, and Tilo wanted a full-length album. So we wrote 4 new songs and added them up to the other (Lacrimosa, Crematory). The mini is still available (we still have about 100), the rest we sold on single gigs before the album was released".

Why do you think that Tilo Wolf was so enthusiastic and offer you a deal? Is Hall of Sermon the perfect label to spread the name of **THE GALLERY** properly?

—"I think that Tilo liked that special touch of music. And I also think that he heard the honesty inside. To Hall of Sermon we must say that we have a very, very good sense to be there. The concept of the label functions more and more. For the very first time the label started fat promotion-campaigns for other bands beside Lacrimosa like **THE GALLERY** or Dreams of Sanity, for example. To be on Hall of Sermon and to know about Tilo's leadership gave us a strong will for concentration to work on the songs for our second album".

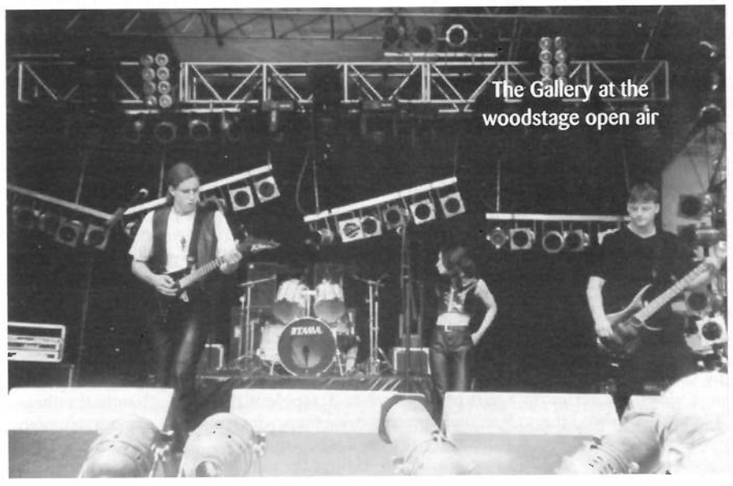
You avoid to be classified in a precise style. Is this lack of restriction a natural part of T.G.'s philosophy? What kind of musical levels do you wish to reach?

—"We have no special philosophy but I think the high approach to ourselves makes us work for individuality again and again. We don't want to develop by force... We just do it, ha ha! You will hear it. Anytime anybody said: "The aim is the way" and I think he was right".

Is **THE GALLERY** far away from politics? What's your point of view (as an individual being) of left/right doctrine?

—"I don't think much of any extremists. We all lived about 16 years under a doctrine in the GDR. It's a wonder that the change could happen without violence and we are still full of gratitude for it. Violence has never been a solution for anything. **THE GALLERY** is not a political band, but it would be a lie that we aren't interested in politics. Read the lines on the Dreamscapes sleeve. "Unfaded Dream", "A voyage..." and also "Cordiality dying" are working on that base. Not in an intellectual kind, but shallow... viewing and discovering. Actually there will be no track on such a base on the new album. It will enclose songs of love and death exclusively".

The cover artwork of "Dreamscapes" looks puzzling. Tell us a bit, please.



—"There are a lot of mirrors. These are bodies covered by fabric. And there is the different view into this room. These three elements are part of our Dreamscapes. We look into the mirror and what we see are very different sides of our personalities. There are secrets within us, covered by lies, covered by fear, maybe... we don't know if we want to face the "I" or not. This non-vertical/horizontal kind of view expresses and individual view on things and how they are".

You've blended on "Dreamscapes" the vitality of Metal and calm (stirring) melodies... What are the grounds to create such a "sweet" cocktail? How would you describe (to those who

haven't listened it yet) the music contained in your debut album?

—"The "cocktail" is the result that 3 of us listened to metal nearly as long as I can think. But in general none of us wanted to limit himself/herself. This is also the course why my sister and I are singing- we do not grunt. The fat guitars bring us the power to transport our attitude in such an intense way. To someone who hasn't ever heard about us I would describe our music as very intense and emotional, fresh and progressive with much melody".

A didgeridoo is used in "Soporific". To be honest, I haven't heard anything of that instrument before. I'm curious about how a didgeridoo looks like.

—"The Didgeridoo... it's an instrument which was created by the natives down under. But the Didgeridoo that played on the album I have built myself while a seminar about Australia and its native culture. My instrument is built of cane and it's covered by native drawings... original self-made native drawings, ha ha! I'm studying on the art/design sector, so I got the reason to take part on that seminar. The didgeridoo is fantastic! Using a special Trance-Breathing-Technique you can blow it for hours without having only one break! But I reach it for just one time- you must stop thinking of blowing it right. But it's blown on "Ea", not on "Soporific".

"Elemente" is your only track sung in your mother tongue. Why?

—"A friend of the band wrote the lyrics. He also writes poems and after we made an English version of a German poem made by him of "Soporific", he came and said: "Here is "Elemente"... just try it in German!". It seems quite successful to us. But it's not a live-song... just too many facets".

Lyrics deal with global and personal things, occurences, searching for solutions... It'd be interesting to give the details of titles as "Unfaded dreams", "Soporific", or "Cordiality dying".

—"Now when I read this question I must laugh. These are exactly the three which were mentioned until now! But no- the "Soporific"- lyrics! Our friend wrote them when he was in a very strange situation- he was persecuted! But it's not on me to explain this... you should better ask for himself".

The Gallery played with Lacrimosa, Secret Discovery and Darkseed. I prompt you to write the most remarkable experiences of that extensive European Tour.

—"Oh god- it was just great!!! I'm yearning for the next one, really we all do! The tour has been organised very good and it was very successful. Nearly everyone had a good wire to us. It was a great time in which we made a lot of experiences in any kind of musicbizz. The most important experiences were the 27 showtimes, evening by evening... and Darkseed- Stefan's panties, ha ha!"

How do you see the development in your second album (compared with "Dreamscapes")? Will it keep the basis of its predecessor?

—"It's the very first time when I speak about details of the 2nd album. The powerful moments got more power. The silent moments are even more intense, the refrainseven catchier. The entire thing has increased on grandeur, there is a big dynamic potential within the music... all in the course of self-realisation. We all have become better instrumentalists and songwriters, Antje and me worked hard on the vocals... they got a more specific use. We have tried to realise the lyrics even more perfect by the music. The general feeling will be different to "Dreamscapes" but I think that you'll hear instantly that it's **THE GALLERY.** We guess no **THE GALLERY** fan will be disappointed".

Any closing words. Thanks for your time.

—"We thank you for this interview and want to greet all the Inner Essence-readers.. Watch out for our new album".

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF COSMETICS

Anne Nurmi is a Finnish girl (where else...) who lives in a wonderful world; Lacrimosa. She also spends her days working for a record company; Hall of Sermon. Everything is perfect is Lacrimosa-world. There's no place for self-criticism there. Anne attends very friendly to the media (logically as it's a part of the business). One day she received a request for a kinda interview. Of course, she'd attend it in a very polite form but she didn't expect a couple of "non-politically correct" questions. She's easily offended and suddenly she decided not to answer the whole interview, ignoring all paparazzo's previous work. Do you consider "Angst", "Einsamkeit" and "Satura" fantastic albums while "Inferno", "Stille" or their last double live-CD nothing but commercial and empty strategies? Then you'll be declared insane in Lacrimonic empire. Read this naive questionnaire (Num. 13, 14, 17) and judge by yourself. Can you lend me your lipstick, Anne? 1. You left Finland years ago... How would you describe your first experiences in Switzerland? Was it hard to adapt yourself to the Swish life-style? 2. Your career began in Two Witches (1987) though I've read somewhere that there was previously something called Noidat, right? A personal reflection of that period... In what ways you were really involved in Two Witches? 3. Did Tilo Wolf give you the chance to enter into his empire? Perhaps... An innuendo by your side? Is Lacrimosa a gift of destiny? 4. A tape entitled "Clamor" circulated through an underground circle (fans who still want to get a copy, forget it!). Satisfy the ones who are curious about some details of Tilo's first creation. 5. Hall of Sermon was born to keep Lacrimosa controlled in all its aspects. Consequence? A consistent result; "Angst". Would you agree with me that this is the most personal, intimate and mystical album? Don't you think sixth track ("Fränen Der Existzlosigheit") could be considered the most tragic (but most beautiful at the same time) requiem? 6. Have things worked out better than expected in the label? How would you explain the progress in these seven years? 7. You're also a part of H.O.S.? Can your work be considered as "essential"? 8. Do you take part in all resolutions of H.O.S.? How does a day of yours like at the office' How many people are involved on it? 9. The label is also on Internet. What are the customers going to find in your Webpage? 10. Regarding to Hall of Sermon once again, I figure that The Helvetic Art compilation was devised with the intention of showing something more about bands from Switzerland. Nonetheless Network has been the only one that had an extra-support. Do you really believe in the potential of Swiss artists? 11. Lacrimosa won the Zillo-price (10,000 DM). Then Tilo Wolff created Lacrimosa's competition which ended up with the addition of Dreams of Sanity, The Gallery,... Did you follow any "aim" method to proclaim Dreams of Sanity as the winner? What made it superior to the rest? 12. The Lacrimosa story may be split in two definite periods: A much more emotional one, expressing all those negative feelings (this part would comprise "Angst", "Eisamkeit", and "Satura" albums) and the second division is certainly more "metallic", straight and aggressive ("Inferno", "Stille"). What do you think of it' Do you believe in all efforts as a unity? 13. Would you consider determinant the use of Jan Yrlund (Ex –Prestige) and AC (Running Wild) for the aforementioned "metallic" period? Or on the contrary, Are they nothing but slaves obeying Mastermind's rules? 14. These lines (included on last H.O.S. catalogue) are quite meaningful: "By now, Lacrimosa has become one of the leading exponents of the Alternative Rock music without getting influenced by current trends; it rather contributed to the creation on new trends". Is Lacrimosa definitely the estándar bearer of saturated "Gothic Metal" wave? Why? 15. A clown is the central figure of all cover artworks of Lacrimosa releases. What does it represent? Has it got something to do with a corner of Tilo's personality? 16. What do you wish to express through your lyrics in English (in the opposite direction of Tilo's words)? Is it an spontaneous voice that flows slowly towards papers? 17. I must admit that I'm not very enthusiastic of music videos but... "Copycat" clip really disappointed me (very simple concept, headbanging,... Pffff). Have you found enough attractive points of that clip? To those who are still interested in your visual appearances... What does the new "The Silent Clips" show? 18. I won't disturb you anymore, so you have the last chance to close this... Do it now!

ANALOGUE TULIPS INVADE YOUR CD-PLAYER

If you think everything is already invented in music, then you haven't heard Dutch fetishists: WISH. I still remember when a friend of mine said once: "... I've just bought a CD of a band called Wish and they're so bloody great"!). Logically, I had to look for myself... it was their "Monochrome" first album, and yes, bloody great!!! I must admit "Monochrome" took me by surprise, a very surprising effort, indeed. I wouldn't have expected such meditative moments, Bart's versatile voice combined with Nancy's powerful throat ("Beauty and the Beast" effect?), gloomy programming, enchanting bass-lines, "impressionistic" and crude lyrics ("I believe in a true introspection and I believe in living a lie; I've been caged and the cage is burning, the key is neatly tucked away"), and so on. Second chapter; during a short (but exhausting) trip to Germany, Wish coincidentally started European Extravaganza Tour in Berlin. Of course, I didn't miss it... one of the most fantastic performances I've ever seen in my life (Don't doubt to see them live in the future...). I also got there a copy of "Jane Doe" MCD which confused my mind even more with its energetic and danceable songs. Maybe, I'm not ready yet for this drastical change. This impression was confirmed when Micha V.D. sent me "On the eve of self-destruction" promotional tape (not for sale!) containing four songs ("Salvation", "Mute", "Nightcrawler", "Fetish") of "Down the Drain" second album. This new stuff get out of my hands!!! I needed 7/8 listenings to "assimilate" this amalgam of digital sounds, bizarre structures,... It's almost impossible to describe them. You have to experience and then... You'll be near to the self-destruction!!! Androids and other specimens should read this.

WISH into Die Insel (Berlin) during European Extravaganza

Ghostdance Inc: An interesting own initiative. Let us know more about all the activities related to it, members, how to enter into the list...

—"Ghostdance Inc. was brought into this world as an intermediary between the band and everyone somehow interested in this strange phenomenon; to show the world what's going on in the band, what the plans are and the stuff that keep us busy in one way or another. Before the existence of G.I. we spent hours and hours answering letters from people who wanted to know where we would do the next gig do where they could purchase T-Shirts and stuff like that. G.I. basically is one girl who puts all her efforts and time in keeping people informed about Wish and about the people and activities behind Wish. Subscribing to G.I. is easy... just send us a postcard with your full address and we will take care of the rest".

Wish is formed by ex –members of The Gathering and Dead End. Why did you stop all your activities with previous bands? What's your opinion of The Gathering success in "Mandylion" and "Nightime Birds"? (Musical side hasn't varied too much since the very beginning. Female-vocalist did the rest)

—"When musical opinions are sharply divided, sometimes the only thing left to do is to take a different route instead of desperately trying to talk the others into accepting your vision on what's good and what's not. It's a waste of time and a painful process that leads to nothing at all. And this was the case with both Dead End and The Gathering. Next to the fact that Bart used to do the vocals for The Gathering there is no connection at all... I suppose the they do a good job, but who am I to judge their stuff, considering the fact that everything we listen to and create ourselves comes from an entirely different planet".

Your band entered into the market through "Monochrome", a kind of previous stuff is unknown for the audience. Inform us if first compositions are all included on "Monochrome" ("Unreleased" material?).

—"Pretty much all the songs we did around that time are recorded on the "Monochrome" album; there are some bits and pieces unreleased but those songs will probably never see the light of day. I reckon that releasing a debut album is sort of getting rid of all the crappy post-childhood ideas, with the marginal comment that almost every tune you play has its roots in some other band that your subsconcious picked up somewhere along the way. You know, when you're somewhere further down the road you learn to find a place you can actually call your own and to create stuff without the inevitable referring to other people's shit. I guess it's all part of the learning process...".

Have you had any line-up changes from the first steps until recent days? I'm reading about an "affair" with Nancy De Valk. What's happening now?

—"We started of as "the band with two bass-players and no guitars", but because of the fact that the second bass player had a completely different conception of the band and life in general, we tossed him out. We surprisingly filled up the gap with the young yet talented guitar-player Xander van Aart, who joined us on the "Jane Doe" trip and several gigs, but apparently he couldn't stand the pressure and decided to leave us a while ago. So at this very moment we are back to sorting out some new flesh, which is somehow to do after all. The "affair" with Nancy, you read about, is the result of a long period in which we asked ourselves what would be the necessary ingredients for the band like us in the near future. Somehow we found ourselves contemplating the female vocals in the new songs; we couldn't really fit it in the picture anymore. And since we felt like being instructed by the band, we just had to bring to an end that particular part".

Most people links Wish and "Gothic". What's your stance? Do you hate to be labelled into one style?

—"I know people tend to link us with goth-music and frankly I don't give a good damn. We somehow started as a sort of goth-band, but I can't really put a tag on the thing we do right now. It's even harder for us than someone else, because we've got a very clear picture of all the different layers we put in our music while others just see the result of the staking-process, you know?".

What's the message behind "Monochrome"? And cover?

—"I'm not sure if it's possible to cut it back to just one message... I rather speak of a full range of messages and ideas behind it. But one important factor in all of those stories is the element time with all its ugly faces and with that information in the back of your mind it's easy to understand why it's all wrapped up in such a cover".

Debut album was recorded in only three days. What's the cause for such short period of time? Had some passages been altered with more dates into the studio?

—"Basically money was the reason for such short recording-schedule. We couldn't afford to use more than three days for a recording, without being backed up by a proper recordlabel. Because when we actually started recording we still had to negotiate with Moonlight Rec. I'm sure that things would have worked out differently if we just had some more time, but I'm also aware that there was quite some lack of knowledge. The process of recording an album is somehow like taking a polaroid of a certain situation and that particular polaroid will be completely different if you just wait a couple of days or months or even years. If we would bother to record that album again, you would probably recognise bits and pieces but that would be about it. Wish in the year 1998 can't be compared with the band that once was".

"Monochrome" is opened with these whispers: "Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, And the wisdom to know the difference". Doesn't it sound like an "invocation"? Is it an essential premise in your life?

—"To be honest with you I'm not fully sure who the person was who actually wrote it, because it's been used for varied purposes at least a couple of hundred times by a huge amount of people, but the reason why we felt it would match the atmosphere on that album is this. Just before the "Monochrome" album would be recorded my mother died after a period of two long and hard years of contemplating life and death, while being turned inside out by some disease. And suddenly it felt like every song, we had stacked up for the "Monochrome" album, was somehow based on her lifestory in just one blink of the eye. And since that was my mother's way of life, we decided to use it on the album as a sort of tribute to her but as well as a lesson to everyone. Looking over my shoulder I think that my mother's death has been the most important event of my life, because it somehow created the person I am today. Nietzsche once said: "What doesn't kill you, makes you stronger" and I sincerely feel he's been right all along".

People demands labels on music with the intention of sorting out bands into specific styles. Wish isn't for sure an easy example. How would you categorise it?

—"Personally I like to see our music as the Twilight Zone between traditional rock and modern dance and even though it might be confusing for some people I think that that's the power of Wish. It's not that we are robbing the cradle or something, we take bits from different styles of music, combine them together and create something completely new, that's about it".

Does crystal ball show any bright future? What's WISH's goal?

—"Well, we crushed the crystal ball a long time ago. We don't look back too much neither nor we look forward for more than half a year, simply because we have to make it happen TODAY. There's no long term –plans or what so ever, we just do what feels right to us and we'll just see what comes forward from that. Right now we're working on some new songs for the D.T.D-album ad we're negotiating with some record labels about the release of that particular album, but next to that we'll just wait and see what happens".

There are some obvious changes from "Monochrome" to "Jane Doe" MCD (which is more or less a "test" for "Down the Drain" second album). Try to describe something of your new music horizons (new technologies are definitely another part of WISH's personality).

—"Uhm... it's not that "Jane Doe" MCD is some test of D.T.D..., 'cause it would not live up to what should be expected from our next album, but you should look at this as a sort of transition. We just knew that we couldn't get from "Monochrome" to a higher level like D.T.D in just one step; we realised damn well that there should be something in between to prevent us from falling. That's why we decided to take a smaller step to a thing like "Jane Doe" which gives you a slight clue which direction it will be going, but it doesn't tell you where it will end. "South by Southwest" is a song that will also be on "D.T.D." but this time in the shape it was supposed to be when we first wrote it. The next album will, more than ever, show it's all about with this strange phenomenon Wish; a rare combination of human emotions and cold technologies. I think it will be a very honest album that will push you from one extreme to another, without you knowing it. We have just finished "Eve of Self- Destruction", a promotional recording of four new songs, that enables us to see what we've got right now and what we still have to work on. I think that the recording gives you quite a fair view on the next album".

The back cover of "Jane Doe" shows a wall where it's readable "The world is loaded". In what ways do you consider the world as "loaded"?

—"Just take a good look at the world around you and tell me what you see. There's no damn way that you're able to convince me that you become a happy camper when you see all the shit that's happening on this ball of dirt. You know, to me it's obvious that there are too many people out there that got pushed around for far too long and now can't seem to find an answer when someone asks them why they bother to continue living. It's the constant oppression by the great amount of so called morals that they were force-fed ever since they were born, the everlasting attempt to fit in the society that doesn't want them and of course that harsh regime of all false religions like Christianity that tells'm they're sinners who will end up in hell, that really is the catalyst for them to freak out big time. I can give another hundred reasons, but see for yourself. Watch man cutting another up, doing all sorts of drugs, joining weird sects, looking for ways to satisfy the bizarre sexual desires, etc, etc. Society did its utmost to beat'm all in shape and now it's going to blow up in its face. We had it coming for so long now, and it seems that there's no way we're going to buy ourselves out of this".

European Extravaganza was an excellent chance to show the potential of Wish. The appearance on stage (lights, programming, etc) can be summarised with one word: Impressive. You should explain at this point to those who haven't seen it how a gig of yours look like. What's your personal reflection of European Extravaganza?

—"We reckon that playing live is the ultimate chance to drag the audience into the "fin de siecle"- feeling we proclaim in our songs, so that's just what we do. The music, the lights and all the other shit are just there to crate the right atmosphere that anables us to open up and breathe the songs. Doing these gigs sometimes is pretty self-destructive activity but to us it's all about being honest so the satisfaction afterwards is worth the pain, believe me. Well, there's no way I can possibly explain how it is to experience one of our gigs, so people just have to see for themselves, but to those of you who did get the chance to see us on European Extravaganza I can tell you this; you have seen nothing yet".

Another tour is going to take place in Finland (Two Witches and Babylon Whores). "Confess" your plans for this new experience. Will the organisation this time be according to the circumstances?

—"Since we just got ourselves a new guitarplayer and decided to work with him on some stuff for the new album, we postponed the whole Finland-thing until sometime later this year. Playing with Babylon Whores was such great fun that we'll work our butts of to do that again on a Finnish tour, that's for sure.

There's a lack of wide distribution on WISH's stuff due to the fact that they're released by the small German Moonlight Records. Why did you decide to sign a contract with Oliver Kraupa? It's very likely that second album will be out through Moonlight. Have bigger Record Companies showed interest to handle "Down the Drain"?

—"Well, the lack of decent distribution and fucking things up in general forced us to decide not to release D.T.D for Moonlight Records. There are some bigger record companies that already showed their interest to release D.T.D but since we're still working on that I rather not talk about that. But you'll be the first to hear about that when things are worked out, no doubt about that".

Some of the songs of your second full-length were already played during European Extravaganza while others saw the light after the tour. You have the necessary space here to publicise your most recent compositions... Any "unpredictable" surprise? Will most of them keep the stigma of "South by Southwest" (included on "Jane Doe" and also a part of "Down the Drain")?

—"The new songs are a completely different story so it wouldn't do any good to try to compare those with the old stuff and my attempts to find the words to describe the new stuff would fail as well, so you'll just have to wait and see. But I'm sure we'll finally get rid of every stigma we ever had".

O'MALLEY'S BAR

Some years passed since a letter stamped in the USA arrived at my lair. A guy called Stephen O'Malley told me something about his Descent Magazine; one of the most solid pieces of paper I've ever read. It's not only its impressive layout but also of Stephen's personal style of inquiring. He's the ability to wake up some people's neurones. Seeing his visual works in Descent, it wasn't weird at all that Misanthropy Records have got him sized up. A daring traveller like Stephen couldn't loose this concord. He was also taking his first steps as a guitar player to eliminate boredom generated by a big town like Seattle. Thorr's Hammer was the name chosen for this crusade (smiles?); an Hellhammerish attempt with an awful vocalist. The calendar was falling and Stephen recovered the whole reputation (not for himself but...) thanks to Burning Witch. They're practising in "Crippled Lucifer" an exasperating Doom that will make on your nerves. Remember Thergothon "Stream form the heavens"? It's not far away but using more varied vocal lines. Umm, I'm just reading the titles: "Stillborn", "History of Hell", "Sacred predictions",... familiar? If this wasn't enough he's also involved in a kinda label (The Ajna Offensive) releasing limited editions on different forms of dark music. Argggg, let's visit O'Malley at his bar. Cheers!

You had to leave England... What can you say of this sudden departure? How would you describe your relationship with Tiziana?

—"Well, we applied for the foreign work permit and it was denied. We had expected it to be approved but obviously this was wrong. Apparently the British government had found me "unqualified" due to my lack of college degree in design work. It didn't matter that I had been doing such work for several years, and had several positive references regarding the quality of my work. In the end, we even appealed to the head of the state in the UK (Mr. Blair) and he responded that he couldn't help. I still continue to design Misanthropy's releases, albeit from different shores. It could be a blessing in disguise, in some respects, although it completely turned my life upside down, as it now seems probable that a US office will open here in 1999. Life goes on. Tiziana is one of my closest friends and colleagues. We've known each other and have always hot on well. I believe this is due to our mutual appreciation of the finer and most bitter elements of sarcasm and humour".

A brief analysis of your English experience... Was it something close to personal maturity?

—"I don't know if that would be the proper description. I was very settled and responsible in the UK (in comparison of my days in Seattle). Maturity to me is when you reach your pinnacle, which I don't feel I've done at all. I don't see this happening for several decades, most likely. However, the whole of 1997 was to me a period of enormous growth and realisation. I suppose this is true whenever one sees, tastes, and feels other cultures and lands, but for me it me appreciate details I was previously oblivious or opposed to. Maybe it could be more appropriate to say some of my ignorance. Changed my life, obviously".

How did an American manage in Hadleigh? What did you miss of your homeland?

—"I managed fine for the most part, the change to a quiet, small town way of life was refreshing and enlightening. After a while though, I accepted that I am a city person, and things started to be a little too quiet and dull. It's a great environment for focus, contemplation, and reflection, but... I'm telling the same old story here. Now that I'm back in the city I hypocritically miss the quiet and seclusion! I guess it's never good enough. The parts of my homeland I missed were my friends, family, band, etc. It wasn't the homeland that I missed at all, but rather the people (although some intoxications of various sorts which can be persued in Seattle were noticeably absent, probably for my benefit in the end)".

What do you remember of your arrival at the Misanthropic empire? Was it hard to adapt yourself to the circumstances after a sex change?

—"It was extremely painful and hard. Like I said it changed my life but also my physique. Luckily for myself the British pharmacies are plentiful with painkillers and opiates to help ease this form of transformational operation. The Misanthropic empire accepted me with open, loving misanthropic arms. Actually I was welcomed most everywhere I went in Europe. The hospitality was outstanding. My arrival consisted of a long period of fatigue form the transition and nervousness about the decision. These fears were soon dashed away into dust though".

What's your stance on the so called American way of life? How do you see the Americanisation in most of the European countries?

> "I also feel that many Europeans have a blind and arrogant attitude towards Americrca, with very little personal base to back up their thoughts. What some Europeans don't get is that it doesn't necesarily thake history to validate culture"

—"I feel I stand outside of typical norms of "Americanisms", if I may be so bold. To me, al lot of these concepts are as foreign as they may be to you. However, I also feel that many Europeans have a blind and arrogant attitude towards America, with very little personal base to back up their thoughts. What some Europeans don't get is that it doesn't necessarily take history to validate culture. I say this as I reside in the wasteland of American culture, Los Angeles (but at the same time is a bastion of creation). Much of Europe I experienced is in many ways "Americanised", but there are elements which can never be replaced. I think many people mistake "Americanism" with the typical western democratic capitalist culture, although America is of course the epitome of that, and on which most other western governments are modelled. Returning to the United States has rebirth my animosity a bit, but it's for different reasons now. More of a feeling of separation exists, but I don't care personally any longer. As long as my life is well it doesn't really matter what the fuck the rest of the world does. I have the travelling bug now, so I don't really see myself staying in one place for too long, I'll probably be back in Europe soon enough".

I'd like to halt in the introductory words of Descent IV, especially when you wrote "It may seen that Descent is trying to escape it's larval state and the may be true but it's not that we are running from anything". Do you consider that the magazine is going in the right way to become a consistent entity (with an own identity)? Do you believe in this issue as "something different"?

—"Descent definitely has it's own identity I think, although it might also change issue. However, the underlying current has been addiction to dark music and art, and that will not change (else it wouldn't be Descent). I've not really considered if the magazine has ever been going in "the right way" as it's presentation and content is a direct reflection of my mood and opinions at the time, and the planning has never been too extensive. I think the fourth issue was something different, but then they've all been, to me at least. It parallels my personal progression in life in some ways, most obviously in skill of execution of the contents. The "larval stage" has not been escaped from yet, frankly I think it will yield an entirely different entity when it does bloom. It's an early stage of expression".

Your standards for interviews have risen over the years (a distinguished mention for third and fourth issue). People should read thoroughly those with Monumentum (#3), Ved Buens Ende (#3), Beyond Dawn (#4), SSHE Retina Stimulants (#4),... just to name a few. Where does this solidness root? Is it based in a profound analysis or maybe something more spontaneous?

—"Thanks a lot for the compliment. The interviews have always been solid in the magazine I think (at least at time of publication), by the second issue we'd already begun appreciating some of the more serious types unintentional humour, and the appreciation soon turned to deliberate baiting at times (i.e.: Abruptum issue 4, called disgusting by one reader!). We sincerely enjoy each of the musical groups at the time of interviewing, although this appreciation is not always everlasting, and sometimes partially so as a result of the interview. Personally, the interviews are usually spontaneously written but a result of a deep analysis over time of the music, so

it's a combination of both methods you've suggested. However, I feel I re-invent my interviewing (and writing) process each time I do so. I'm too abstract to plan these linearly or methodically... perhaps you can gain this impression by reading some of the questions we ask the more respectable and intelligent groups? The music reviews are exclusively spontaneous, generally, at least on my part. Remember that Tyler has contributed more and more material each issue, which definitely has sculpted the whole for the better".

You don't seem to be very satisfied with the first issue of Descent. Perhaps... an erroneous deduction? What would be the conclusion of that stage?

—"Independence and responsibility. It's just a matter of looking back on early stages of your life and noticing the errors and primitive adolescent approaches you made, little more. I was extremely satisfied (in a way that hasn't been matched by the release of the other issues) when the first was finished. It was fresh then and I was not so jaded. I suppose that was a magical blessing hand in hand with ignorance of the music industry, both which vanished simultaneously... I was younger and life was a bit simpler to understand. I don't regret anything I've done, several of the interviews were unusual for the time, and I think that issue inspired many other people to create a similar forum of their own".

Descent is not limited to one musical style. On the contrary, you've exposed bands from Industrial, Electronic, Experimental,... without forgetting all those popular one (Bathory, Burzum, Darkthrone, Emperor, In the Woods..., etc). Why your fascination for "UN-metallic" sounds (Brighter Death Now, Death in June, The Grey Wolves,...)? What does it pass on you?

—"I'm not limited to one musical style. The same elements which appreciate in most original true music and sounds: authenticity, passion, emotion, vision... when a sonic element creates a visual interpretation I am most satisfied. My miserable outlook (sometimes anyway) is often complimented by darker music of several varieties. However, the sun of southern California has caused the last month to be exclusively Lynyrd Skynyrd, Tain T and opera as my listening tastes. Basically, I enjoy music which is innovative in some aspects, or at least partially in so me".

Your #4 showed (one more time) the superficialness, unimagination and linguistic incompetence of the Norwegian rulers (?) [Aeternus, Gorgoroth,...]. What's your perception of the persons inquired responses? Don't you think that there are so many mental barriers?

—"I gained the impression that Infernus is an intelligent person, but didn't come across properly in a written /mail interview. I think his writing skills probably don't live up to what he's trying to say... I think it would have been an interesting phone interview. Maybe I'll try to work this out for issue five (with the release of their new album this could be realistic)? Aries seemed dense, or at least caught in a fantastic bubble of his own surreality (a very common attribute of live-at-mommy warbrothers). Nothing personal towards Aries, as I tend to retreat to a similar stage whenever possible. Aries just seemed to be a common middle class metaller (I prefer the term of Monger myself), the same breed which exists the world over (not just in Norway, or America... especially Germany!). Basically, in these cases we are dealing with a form of music which mainly draws upon the primal emotions of anger, hatred, and paranoia for its effectiveness, at least on a surface level (of which many/most view as the deepest). The level of comprehension required to create aggressively in this context is not generally too high. To create beautifully or truly conceptually (such as Burzum, Emperor, Satyricon,...) therein requires a broader worldview than "Imagine his (Aries) existence in this world... oh how much blood and gorge he would provide mother earth with...". Whatever...".

Descent is cursed when it comes to the printing process... What made you extremely sick? Was it mostly printers' fault?

—"Just boring technical errors and promises which weren't lived up to or frequently ignored. I try to block these from my memory once the lesson is learned, and I'd rather not bring them up again. Yeah, it may sound like a cop out, but it was almost exclusively printer's fault. It's true, and oddly it almost exclusively happens concerning the magazine, and rarely with any of the other print jobs I've organised".

The third issue announced (for Descent IV) a confirmed interview with Tom G. Warrior, Women of the SS/Sodom, Arcturus, but people aren't going to find anything of this. What happened? Are you another victim of Warrior's false promises?

—"Umm, not a victim of TG Warrior's, but perhaps one of inconsistency when it comes to estimating the contents over a year and half in advance. I'd read in so many interviews with TGW in the meantime that I'd found out most what I needed to know (generally the motivation for interviewing in the first place), and besides, I wasn't interested in his new music when I finally, and besides, I was not interested in his new music when I finally heard it. Arcturus will eventually make it in the magazine, in fact I will probably call Garrm up for a chat soon, as we discussed this in Oslo last summer. One of the worst things to happen in the metal scene lately (besides 80% of the releases during 1997-1998) was the freezing of that band. They are amazing, a jewel. Women of the SS/Sodom were excellent, their next incarnation wasn't (in my opinion). Now it's pointless to feature them as the soul behind the original is dead. Consistency was never my best virtue".

The fifth issue is being assembled and it could be available in not so distant moons. What can you anticipate about it? Are you going to exceed all limits?

—"I hope so, but doubt it due to financial limitations. Angelcorpse, Burzum, Boyd Rice, Der Blutharsch, Sleep, Marduk, Orplid, Ernte, Last Chapter, Mayhem, Eyehategod, Genocide Organ, Tho-So-Aa, Inade, Shinjuku Thief/Dorobo, Dream Into Dust, Turbund Sturmwerk, Enslaved, Pentacle, etc. Maybe a feature on the great Japanese bands Boris, Greenmachine and corrupted. More schizophrenic than ever! Also there shall be a nice feature on the American artist Stephen Kasner (as well as full colour coverart). My standars have risen for this project, although my participation in the writing this time around is the least ever. Thank you Tyler for being the engine".

You mentioned to me that this may be the last issue. Why? Let me doubt it, Stephen.

—"It's a fleeting thought that comes around then and again... Why bother? It's born out of obsession, but my satisfaction with the music doesn't necessarily entail knowing every detail of the artists and their lives any longer. The music and imagery speaks for itself more these days. The disappointment in so many cases has created a desire to reclude to the innocent and mysterious stage which existed before this whole mess got off the ground. Of course this is impossible, but it's a nice thought. Perhaps this is why the questions have gradually evolved into a sort of philosophical parry back and forth, rather than a survey. There is definitely a fifth, however, as I've said. In the beginning, I had a goal to complete five issues, as someone once said something such as a zine isn't worth it unless you make it the fifth. For some unknown reasons this ridiculous viewpoint stuck with me, back in the cerebral cobwebs. It could be hard to determine if a sixth will later appear, but I tend to think it will, as Tyler's drive is really inspirational. My own form of expression has shifted from focusing and analysing other's creative aspects, to focusing on my sire for personal satisfaction which has developed over the years".

You're still doing Misanthropy's design (although you've also done something f.e. for Arcturus "Constellation" LP). Which design are you really proud of? How much time do you usually to spend What other visual presentations do you find excellent?

—"I've done quite a bit of other works besides Misanthropy's over the years before I worked for them, but let's hope most of that won't surface. Also, I've confirmed some other freelance in the future for a few electronic labels as well as the next Emperor and Eyehategod albums. In The Woods... "Omnio" is my favourite design, especially the DLP. I think it's beautiful, and has a vibe of the 70's without that bullshit nostalgia (i.e.: Sheavy, Orange Goblin). Also, the whole creation process of the design was an excellent time and I made a very good friend as well. I also really enjoy the digipak and disc of Mayhem MCD. The new Misanthropy newsletter should also come out quite nice. Each project of course takes a varied amount of time, but I prefer to have at least two weeks in order to plan, execute, reflect, and polish. It can be done much quicker, but it's not worth it if it can be avoided. Similar to a brewing process. CMI is of course excellent, and Roger's work inspired me quite a bit over the years (take a look at Descent III), I especially enjoy his experimentation with matte and gloss these days. Blue Note probably have the most classic visual design of any label ever. The urban feeling of the release were captured perfectly. Tiermes' latest promo CD was stunning I thought, proving the effective aspects of simplicity. Eibon has created some interesting work, and Tesco generally wins in the packaging department. One of the greatest album covers has to be Blackfoot's "Tomcattin". The Miles Davis quintet boxed set which came out earlier this year is unbelievable (in both look and sound). It's probably easier for me to admire biological and architectural designs these days, and apply them visually to this printed medium. Transform the imagery into something else without destroying the original integrity".

Misanthropy has now a wider distribution thanks to Music For Nations. It's the same story repeated again and again ("small" label absorbed by a Multinational...). In what aspects has it been more beneficial? Don't you think that Misanthropy will slowly lose its own identity?

—"It was merely a licensing deal for a few titles, and has dissolved by now. Misanthropy has regained the rights to "La Masquerade..."(partially I think?) so that's a positive thing. It's for the best that the deal didn't work out, in the end at least. Misanthropy will never lose its own identity as longs as Tiziana is at the helm, as it's her baby. I don't think she would allow anyone else to take over the company either. As for your comment on Multinational companies, it's merely a simple product of our times. If you think MFN is a label which rapes and pillages its sub-labels (the existence of Rise Above should explain their attitude, generally, in this regard), you've not seen what some of the big six do. Even MFN is owned by a huge publishing corporation who puppets the label, which may explain the steady degradation in their packaging and presentation over the past year and a half or so".

The release of Mayhem "Wolf's Lair Abyss" MCD/MLP has been (more or less) definitive for the recognition of the label (and also a big amount of money). How would you distinguish "De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas" era and this most recent epoch? Are all these different limited editions of "Wolf's Lair Abyss" logical strategies' (Seeing that some people filled their wallets thanks to Dawns of the Black Hearts, Tribute to the Black Emperors,... in a nutshell: Minimum effort and maximum yield).

—"I disagree with the point I think you are trying to make here. When it comes to WLA we are talking about a legitimate release on a legitimate label. When running a business in the western democatric economic world, the main way to succeed is to supply the product for the pubic demand, otherwise its profit lost and waste. I'm sorry to have to break it to you, but most successful record labels are aimed to MAKE NO MONEY. This doesn't necessarily mean that the music and quality come second rate. If there is a demand for other limited edition versions of a release, why not supply it? I personally find it satisfying as a record buyer to be able to collect the different versions of an album I really enjoy, and many others do as well (perhaps yourself included). Your last comment ("Minimum effort and maximum yield") definitely doesn't apply to this release, least the first part of the phrase. I know that on the different editions (thus far a MCD, LP and PLP) I have spent probably close to 150 hours designing, all in all. Hardly a minimum effort. That's just my side. Logical strategy: yes. But also financial and artistic. "De Mysteriis..." is in most aspects an impeccable monument which cannot be topped. I seriously think it 's the best metal record of the 90's, so far. As for the circumstances surrounding its release, I would find that the intentions and business practises of VOW should be under scrutiny if you are concerned with any moral obligations which may need to be lived up to in order to legitimise a release. If you are speaking musically, WLA era Mayhem is a six year progression with new songwriters. Blasphemer/Hellhammer's collaboration is more brutal than the atmospheres Euronymous/Snorre/Hellhammer were achieving (also the presence of Vikernes I believe added another distinguishing aspect). Mayhem is one of the few really brutal metal bands who I enjoy at the moment. In fact their LA show will be opened exclusively by grind bands (appropriately I think).. they are somewhat in this sound now, in a way, but far darker. PS: I was behind the original LP (ltd to 333 with hand silkscreeneed cover, black ink on black with all black vinyl/labels) and CD edition (of 1000) of "Pure Fucking Armageddon" a few years ago. In Germany noticed that another source had in turn bootlegged the CD version onto a second LP version (I purchased it of course via Hammerheart). Mine evolved into a legitimate release with Necrobutcher getting his fair cut of the profits under good terms. In fact I ended up losing a major portion of my own profit due to acts of people like Metalion ignoring their financial responsibilities, and even my attempts of correspondence about the matter. Thanks Jon! All for the scene! Hail! I despise the fucking illusion".

You were playing in Thorr's Hammer. Give us a small glimpse of those tracks included on the "Dommedagsnatt" tape plus MCD. I'm sorry but I don't find any link for the name of the band/title and an American band...

—"Don't apologise, you're definitely not the first to say this. Runhild Gammelsaeter (the vocalist/lyricist) is a Norwegian whom moved to the states in her early teens. She decided to use her culture, traditional images and themes. Greg Anderson, I and the rest of the band were just more concerned with blasting primitive Hellhammer-esque slop for our pleasure, and partying. It was a fun time among friends and only lasted about 6 weeks before Runhild returned to Oslo for good. The MCD actually issued recently by Greg on his Southern Lord Recordings with a bonus live track. He also has released the CD of another band of mine; Burning Witch (What do you think of this CD, Raúl?), by the time you read this. Southern Lord furthermore will release a SUNN CD later in the summer. Sunn is a low-end power ambient drone project, consisting of massive guitars and bass, samples and probably is some of the heaviest material recorded in this context to date. If anyone out there is interested in obtaining any of these albums or related merchandise you can contact through my address below".

You also started sometime ago The Ajna Offensive (Plecid CD, Monumentum 10", Tormentor PLP, "How terrorists kill compilation CD/LP,...). Are still an active part of this project? What are TAO intentions?

—"We're trying to release some varied stuff... but then of course I'd say that, wouldn't I. Ajna started as a collaboration of Tyler Davis and myself to release an American edition of the second Mortiis LP (ltd to 300 copies), which we did, and then continued with many plans and far less resources to make them come through. It still exists but has been set back to a more realistic level, to avoid further embarrassment and complications. One of the items you mentioned, the Monumentum 10" never saw the light of day (put it this way: to date Monumentum have recorded only one track since their debut, but planned this 10"/MCD and another CD of older material on NAP). We did release a Taint/Strict split 7", and the compilation was cancelled due to a glut of comps featuring similar artists appearing over the past six months (there are 20 copies floating around the CD though, for the ultimate noise nerds). I suppose Ajna is mainly another side of Descent, but they are definitely separate. I'm an active part of it, but I've also been part of several other projects recently outside of Ajna. Ajna has decided to try and do series of vinyls in which artists interpret a visual artist through sound (a sort of mirror of my personal preferences I was speaking of earlier). It will emerge slowly, but there are already a few interested parties of high calibre (in my opinion). I'd also really like to do a Taint PLP... Who knows? All future releases will hopefully issued exclusively on vinyl however".

What do you expect in this new millennium? What are your dreams, fears,... in your new location again in the USA?

—"My dreams: returning to university, love, life, travel, will,... common as human. Simple enough. Creating music and art. The new millennium will probably either the collapse of this era of civilisation or a broad base of progression unlike any we've seen (obviously). I think human biological evolution is not progressing any longer, now we develop technologies to supplant this natural process. The next millennium will definitely contrast the benefits and detriments of this theory. In the meantime I'll just manage to enjoy what I have".

A MOMENTARY LAPSE OF MEDITATION

Things haven't turned out well. Sometimes it's better not to get out of bed... but you're finally back at home. Privacy embraces you with its comfortable hands. You're having a warm bath and tasting delicious wine. This is what NAERVAER offers you at this point: An equilibrium of both body and mind. NAERVAER's the guts redefine music. It'd be sacrilegious trying to explain you how does NAERVAER sound. You'll have to experience it all by yourself. Buy their demo-tape, 7"EP and full-length album (maybe Mr. Inspiration has already visited Terje & Co. I'll cross my fingers...) and uncover a new meaning of the word reflection. One of my fave singers (Jan Kenneth, of course. Read interview with him) is taking part in this project. Obviously, NAERVAER has nothing to do with In the Woods... (and viceversa). Here's a short introduction of Terje's world.

Who's Terje Sagen in that ocean called humanity? Are you able to speak about your own personality? What are your primary motivations?

—"I really hate the kind of questions that revolve around my trying to describe my personality and my way of living. I've tried to answer that kind of questions before, but I get so fucking bored, so I have to let you down here. My primary motivations are probably music and good weather: It makes me comfortable".

A well-known question (though necessary in this case)... What's the meaning of Naervaer? Why did you choose that name?

—"Naervaer is the Norwegian word for PRESENCE, and was chosen 'cause it is a fitting word to use at the musical –reflecting process as well as the music itself".

Tell us about your inner motivations to conceive Naervaer. Was it more based on a single impulse?

—"Naervaer was started around March of '93, and I'd been making and playing a kind of metal oriented style for a couple of years then. I was tired of it. I was keen on changing my musical expression, both in composing and performance. I have always put innovation and originality as one of my first priorities when it comes to music, and I also believe that to reach the purest mood in the music, to the mood which you have inside, you have to let it all come naturally. With this in mind-we started our project".

Have you recently working with other bands/projects (or in the past)? Or on the contrary, Do you concentrate exclusively on Naervaer?

—"I've played in a couple of metal acts in the past, and I have been working with a few bands on their visual sides (in connection with photography), but at the present time Naervaer is my only musical outcome".

Could Naervaer be considered an experimental band? What's experimental for you?

—"Most definitely. I hate stagnation, and as I said earlier, I'm concerned with keeping a constant originality in my work. Experimental is too strive towards new ways of presenting/reflecting my moods. In the musical arrangement of the main foundation or the notes in general. Then you'll prevent any stagnation".

Does Naervaer want to be a revolutionary form of expression? Is your band definitely a different musical concept?

—"I guess everyone who is involved with the musical expression in a serious way, like to think that their outcome is unique. Most of today composers are unfortunately wrong. You'll will always get a piece of your one identity included, but it is often just small fragments. There a few acts that are unique, but whether or not Naervaer is one of them, is not for me to say. I can't stay objective on this topic... I like to think so though".

Is your music more improvised? In what ways do you conceive music?

—"We use a lot of improvisation and it is an excellent way to get the moods you are carrying at that moment, reflected in a pure way. I conceive the music in a natural way, meaning that I don't force it out or decide when I'm going to make it. It can take 30 minutes, and it can take years. I started the process of a song before Naervaer was started and it still isn't finished. Hopefully it will be done to our next release. The problem with doing it in this way, is that your stuck with a melody that you can't get out of your head. In this case for 5 years. The process ends when you finally get it on tape, I personally don't like the recording process that much, but it gets very emotional when you finally here it. All the different layers of music connected-it has to be experienced".

You're not using electronic sounds. It's performed by cello, percussion, contrabass, acoustic guitars,... Do you pretend to create a definite atmosphere? Is it to reach the zenith of passion?

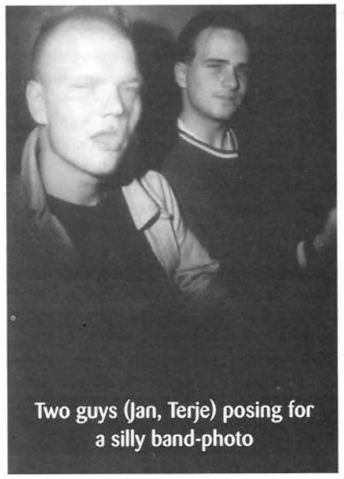
—"The reason for this choice of musical instruments was at the beginning the challenge for it. I had been writing for electric guitars for a while and wanted something new. It is easy to describe anger & frustration with a distorted electric guitar. It is hard to do the same one with a classical one. And when you do succeed with the latter, there is no comparison".

There are several vocal styles that provide a wide range of sensations... What's the importance of vocals? What do you want to transmit with the balance on both male and female voices? Are they other instruments?

—"It is mainly added for a human touch, but also to reflect the moods in a verbal way".

It's unquestionable that Jan's privilegious voice is one of the strongest points... What does it portray on the band? Is Naervaer a "fifty-fifty" project of yours and Jan?

—"I can't possibly strip the music apart and describe the importance of each element. But I can say that I like to get a rush when I listen to music. Rush meaning that I start to freeze and my body hair rises. In the history of Naervaer Jan's musical performance is responsible for my biggest rush. Naervaer has never really been a 50-50 co-operation being that Naervaer is



Two guys (Jan, Terje) posing for a silly band-photo

mainly based on the musical part. I have taken care of the music and parts of the lyrical work and vocal lines, and presented this to Jan. He then turns this into HIS expression. The production of a recording is normally done in unison. There wouldn't be a Naervaer without him. We started making music together at the end of '90, and there has really been no disagreements so far".

Should Naervaer be connected with a spiritual world? Maybe... Does it contain a pure sensation of freedom?

—"No".

Are you thinking of incorporating more members? Is there anyone with the ability to supply new necessities?

—"Naervaer has never been a band and will never be one. A band is about making compromises, but music is the most important thing in my life and I think it's wrong to compromise on personal things like that. We have however got a lot of great things out of improv. sessions in the studio with other musicians, but when it comes to the way that my moods are reflected, I like to be in control of it myself. I believe that you'll get a purer reflection in a project like this then in a band where everyone is involved".

How would describe the lyrics? Do they spread any kind of message? Or... Are they more personal "entities"?

—"They are personal verbal reflections but often include a number of interpretations. Some of them are a kind of improvisation where you just let yourself loose. When we did this on the Demonstration-95, and when looked back on the stuff

afterwards we saw a perfectly clear description of the mood of the song, which probably couldn't have been written better. It is based on the sub-consciousness".

What other things fascinate you? Would you mention uplifting alternatives?

—"Not much really. I do spend some time with photography and enjoy that way of experimentation. I have had traumatic experiences with those uplifting alternatives in the past, but my headache is too big to travel through these at the moment".

"Naervaer has never been a band and never will be one. A band is about making compromises, but music is the most important thing in my life and I think it's wrong to compromise on personal things like that"

Tell us about the process of composition in the demonstration tape 1995. What were the main inspirations to create this first presentation?

—"The process took about 3 years and did reflect a huge personal change. The outcome reflects a lot of sadness and I guess a laid-back form of frustration. One of my biggest problems is to obtain inspiration, so it's hard to find my main inspiration sources, but I suppose the goal of creating something new and experiencing the music taking its shape, played an important role".

The 7"EP includes two tracks taken from the demo plus a new one entitled "The lonely" which turned out a bit different from your most representative "style"; its sorrowful atmosphere really impressed. Reveal me some clues of this song, please.

—"The lonely" was the most personal song I had made to that date, and describe my feelings towards the loss of a close friend".

"When man puts nature before luxury... nature and man will live in harmony...". Why this "slogan" included in the EP? What's the aim?

—"We did as you mentioned include 2 tracks from the demo on the EP, and used these words to drawback some thoughts on the Gen-renovation text. This is a text that offers a very simple solution to big problem".

What can you anticipate of your debut album? How has the material been naturally transferred?

—"I will know how the new stuff will sound like when we're done with the recording. We intend to experiment with some new instruments and percussion, and I feel that the moods will be of a more frustrating state. The most concrete info I can give is that we will now do all the vocal parts in an "alternative" Norwegian language, to get some real vibes going. We will probably start the recording sometime this summer".

Aspirations for Naervaer in the future... Where would you place the band at the beginning of the new millennium?

—"We will keep the basic views we started out with and continue to reflect original music, either together or separate".

Is Naervaer's sound closer to your native land? Or... Is it more universal?

—"I have always been influenced by foreign acts. I grew up on Simon & Garfunkel, Abba and Elvis and have continued to listen to foreign acts aswell, so the part of Naervaer that is influenced by music is pretty international. I do of course a lot of Norse vibes by living here, but as I've said earlier, the main influence is the human moods, and that is universal. You decide!".

I'll quit at this point... Thanks to Martin of Prophecy for making this possible and, of course, to you, Mr. Sagen.

—"Right back at you buddy!!!".

THE BOOK OF SECRETS

Loreena McKennitt speaks about her new album: "When I came across the quote "A good traveller has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving", I felt I had discovered the encapsulation of not only the manner in which this and almost all my other recordings have unfolded, but of an aspect of my life in general.

I had always dreamed of becoming a veterinarian, but here I am a musician wit my own business. No doubt most people have encountered this humbling phenomenon. No matter what plans you down on top of you, in ways and at times you least expect it, and it carries you off in directions you could never have imagined or hoped for.

On a personal level, my challenge has been to acquire the maturity to know what to do with those unexpected experiences: When to hang onto something and when to let it go; whether one should fight it or, instead, to go with it, and seek out the jewels of newfound experience and the possibilities which lie within each of us to take something positive from it.

So, as these musical chemistry experiments come to a close, no doubt you will sooner or later come across something which will have me describing the process of approaching this recording as a sort of musical travel writing.

It would be impossible to describe for you the varied and numerous events and personal exchanges which occurred during the span and recording that never really ceased even when the last mix was done.

The very extensive liner notes to this recording (28 pages in all) touch on a number of its sources of inspiration, whether they were books I had read or experiences I had. Sometimes the pan-Celtic springboard would project me into corners of history such as those you'll find touched upon in "Skellig", namely the Dark Ages monasteries in Ireland where monks copied out ancient manuscripts in a technique associated with the east, thus re-introducing these texts to the continent at a time when the Roman empire was disintegrating.

Or I would find myself on an excavation site in Tuscany accompanied by a wonderful team of archaeologists led by Noelle and David Soren from the University of Arizona, examining the history of the Etruscans who were contemporaries of the Celts and who, together with them, are believed to have influenced the Romans in the areas of design, architecture and urban planning.

At other times, however, that springboard would ultimately lead me into areas that had little or no connection whatsoever to the Celts, such as a train trip I took across Siberia which was an experience later woven into the song "Dante's prayer".

"The Mummer's Dance" was the culmination of a long line of research exercises which began by visiting a puppetmarket by the name of Cuticchio in Palermo, Sicily and which ended up at the traditional May Day celebrations in Padstow, Cornwall.

The actual process of recording "The Book of Secrets" took place over the span of a year or so at Real World Studios in England. Real World is Peter Gabriel's wonderful rural residential recording facility, comprised of various sizes and configurations of studio environments that at times make the place feel like a cross between a commune and a kibbutz. At the dinner table (which is always a magnificent feast!!!!) one can be sitting next to the engineers, producers and musicians who might be associated with anyone from Massive Attack or Black Grape to Sheila Chandra.

What made this arrangement particularly attractive to me (aside from the fact that it is located in a stunningly beautiful part of the world), was that I knew that as the recording evolved I would probably want to have access to a rather eclectic assembly of instruments and players, over and above my regular crew of "idling Porsches". The studio is only an hour and a half away from London, a Mecca for old and strange instruments and players (no offence meant!) so Real World also offered me the opportunity to paint quite spontaneously, musically speaking.

The main control room, which was the environment where we primarily worked, has a glorious front window which leads onto a pond with ducks and swans, and when I tried of watching the musicians preening themselves (just kidding!) I could always gaze out the window and see the fowl doing the same.

Some of my most favourite moments were when the room was filled to the rafters with people (sometimes there were 13 on the deck at the same time) playing together and working creatively off each other: my regular colleague on fiddle, Hugh Marsh, jamming with the Egyptian fiddler Osama, or the faces of Martin Brown and Martin Jenkins when we called them back for the tenth time for the sixth version of "The Highwayman", or the bemused but good-humoured patience of Nick Hayley when our faces with purple dots for no other reason than to test his sense of humour.

Of course, the whole exercise of running a one-artist label and management can get a little intense to not have some fun,, so I am presently exploring the prospects of creating a cartoon strip based on Quinlan Road, so stay tuned for further developments.

In the meantime, I do hope you like the new recording. And if not, as a friend of mine always says, you can always slip it under the short leg of a table".

A TOMB DOWN THE LAKE

Luckily for lovers of decadence, Finnish veterans UNHOLY are back on the road. Their inedible and enigmatic music captured a bunch of people's minds in the past. Listening to "Rapture", I've learnt a bit more about a very special country: Finland. UNHOLY represents perfectly Finnish mentality. Some Finnish guys crossed my way ages ago and they all had the virtue of making on my nerves. Time passed and I'm now starting to appreciate such behaviour. I revived all those moments through "Rapture". By the way, I'm listening their land-mates This Empty Flow "Magenta Skycode" CD (one of my most hailed albums, by the way)... Yes, I know the music is totally different but the atmosphere is of equal value. UNHOLY contains the same dose of primitiveness and that's where you'll find the beauty of this trio (Jan Kuhanen, Pasi Ajo, Ismo Toivonen). My wounds are still bleeding thanks to its repetitive and monotonous structures, Pasi's overwhelming throat,... you'll inevitably get drowned by "Petrified Spirits" or "For the unknown one", just to name a few. Jan was the responsible of ruining my day.

Right after the release of "The Second Ring of Power" the band was laid on ice due to "bad personal feelings among some of the members"? If I'm not indiscreet... What can you say about those "tensions"? Which were your motivations to continue with Unholy?

—"We were all a bit disappointed about the bad success of "The Second...", for we felt that we had made a great album, but the audience just did not found it, I guess. So we did a few gigs for half empty halls and clubs, which was quite frustrating. The bad feelings we had turned into some kind of a bitterness which eventually turned the members of the band against each other. There was never a major fighting, but more like a problem of attitude; part of the band started to fool around during gigs, and some performances turned to orgies of booze, razor blades and blood, so the musical content of those shows were quite low. Things just got out of hands, and we got tired of each other. So when we decided to withdraw everybody agreed, even though I have to admit now, that I was a bit bitter since we had to stop the band for such ridiculous reason. But that was a right thing to do then. After all, the break did good for all of us. Jarkko has his own project and Unholy is stronger than ever. In fact, things are going better and better all the time since "Rapture". The album is the best landmark of our present day commitment for the band".

Unholy's sound has always been far away from the "scene" (Death or Black Metal). What are the strongest points in your style? What makes Unholy different from other bands?

—"I'm the worst person to analyse the style or sound of this band, for to me, to us, it is the only style or sound we know. So you people, who say that we sound different, you can say better in what way we are "different". Maybe we created a style of our own, starting already before "From the Shadows". We just follow our instincts, explore our personal moods and feelings and turn them into music. And also we are fearless of what becomes on experimenting with different kinds of musical ideas. Not many bands have the courage to write and record such songs as "Stench of Ishtars", "Neverending Day", "Wunderwerck" or "Wretched". We don't fear the extremes, and we don't really care if the listeners can't swallow all that. If we feel good about something, we do it".

What kind o mood do you want to create in listeners? Would it be something like visit to one's gallery of horrors? (A place where fears and frustrations have a new meaning)

—"Since music is the reflection of our moods, feelings and ideas, it is possible to see "inside us" by listening our music. Melancholy and the feeling of being lost, an outcast; it is the whole blend of emotions from joy to grief, from love to hatred. We don't decide that this and

"Like Arvo Pärt, a modern Estonian composer, says, the music and the notes are like the magician´s bed of nails; if the nails are plenty and close each other; it is easy to lay on them and feel nothing. Less nails, less notes that is, the more difficult and painful it will be"

this song should have a certain feeling, but the feeling is already in those songs, in those notes; it's a aprior thing that precedes the whole songwriting. The feeling is first, then comes the music. Maybe it's the peculiar Finnish way of thinking, a mixture of Germanic and Slavic influences. One very famous Finnish tango-singer, Toivo Kärki, was once asked why the Finnish people love tango-music so much. He replied that in tango-music the melancholic Slavic emotions and feelings are combined with the rhythm of the German military march. That is the perfect description of Finnish mind; it is slightly schizophrenic and totally mysterious for foreigners".

Statistics reveal that lots of people commit suicide in Northern countries (compared with places like Spain or Italy) Do you have a "logical" explanation? What's your stance

—"Not all Nordic people are like that. The Swedes and the Norwegians are much more "europeans" than the Finns. They don't have that high suicide rates. The worst countries in the world in this sense are Japan, Hungary and Finland. Maybe one reason is the strange Finnish mind I describe it above. The spring is very suicide-friendly time, at least here in Imatra. During six weeks of time three young people have ended their live by jumping into a river. That is a pretty good percentage in a town with only 30 000 inhabitants. This is what happens when you try to convert a bunch of forest dwellers and hillbillies to euro-citizens, or to force them the american life-styles. The number of winners in this game is in decline. And these who swallow all that "cultural" shit and try to live according to the american models, eventually drop out of the systems. I mean, the same kind of thing is happening with the native american populations living in USA; they are dying out due to poverty, booze, desperation and suicides. Loss of identity and loss of trust of one's strength and ability. That, I think, is the "logical" explanation".

What's the main goal in Unholy? And your personal ambitions (as both musician and person)?

—"We have no special goal, but we'd like to do at least one proper tour in Europe in near future, and to continue to make music as long as possible. I have no personal ambitions as a musician, I don't even see myself as such, but I hope I will not get any worse than I already am. As a person I try to be as honest as I can, to everything and everyone, and strong. According to my view, when man is independent as possible, he is the strongest, and a strong man, only depending on his own abilities, is a good man, incapable of evil".

"But if there is a way to fuck with the listeners, then Unzegeist is a perfect way to irritate people and to make them feel shitty. So, I guess, what we really are doing with the song is that we are saying "fuck off" in the form of music"

What's your perception of the change from the early stages to "Rapture"? How do you see the development?

—"We have learnt to put more emphasis on the arrangements, so I guess the songs are today more "listener-friendly" than before. And the principle of "less is more" is today recognised by Unholy; we have never been any engineers what comes to technical side, and the way I see it it's all bullshit. Like Arvo Pärt, a modern Estonian composer says, the music and the notes are like the magician's bed of nails; if the nails are plenty and close each other, it is easy to lay on them and feel nothing. Less nails, less notes that is, the more difficult and painful it will be".

Tell us a little about the process of composition in "Rapture". What primarily inspired you to create such depressive melodies?

—"The process of composition is quite simple; we get together in our smelly rehearsal room, and then after a period of jamming someone just throws in a guitar riff, or a bass line, or some drum rhythm. We jam and see what comes out. Then we pick up the good sounding pieces and start to build a song. It all comes quite naturally. From zulu-basis, as we call it. Everybody adds to a song his individual emotions and moods through his own part, that is our "secret". The depressiveness we have sucked in mother's milk, so it is already there".

What does the cover of this third album represent? In what way is it connected with the title of the album?

—"It's "Agnus Dei" by O. Gallani. Rapture deals a lot with the concept of god, or the multiple faces of god, and with the relation between man and his different "gods". Every man has his god, something he believes in or knows throughout. In this sense we are all "Agnus Dei", whether you are an atheist, capitalist, socialist, satanist, buddhist, chirstian, jew or anything. There is something you bow, and that is what makes your world go around. That is what gives you your thrills, it gives you your rapture".

"For the unknown one" is the only track sung by a female vocalist. Why? What kind of concrete atmosphere did you want to create?

—"That is an interesting song in a sense that the gentle and beautiful vocal is combined with very aggressive and ripping guitar riffs. I think it works really great that way. The atmosphere of the song is quite sad, even hopeless; finite, mortal man staring into depths of the universe and hoping that everything would have some meaning, some reason. But there is more, and you are completely alone, you are an incident, or an accident, without any meaning, any purpose at all. Veera did really fine job with the vocals, and in the future you'll hear more of her fine voice".

"Unzeitgeist" has got a quite straight touch. Give us some of your thoughts regarding this song. "A thought unchained, unpredictably drifting in wider spaces, beyond the limitations of the spirit of time..." Could you determine more about this unchained thought?

—"The word means something like timelessness, spirit of timelessness. The song itself is weird, and I get nausea every time I hear it. The purpose of "Unzeitgeist" is to transgress the narrowness of the spirit of time, to express something which is not commonly agreed as good, or something that is not trendy and does not please the masses. Each time has its own peculiar values and trends, but behind them there are things that rarely change, something that you could call nearly-truths, something not lasting, out of which everything else, including the spirit of time and its manifestations, are dependent on. I'm not saying that the song itself represents the idea, but it is a way to show that there are things independent of the contemporary trends and views. But if there is a way to fuck with the listeners, then "Unzeitgeist" is a perfect way to irritate people and to make them feel shitty. So, I guess, what we really are doing with the song is that we are saying "fuck off" in the form of music. I don't mean this personally. It is just a general way to fuck with everything. So many people, including you, have told us that we sound strange and original, and that we are weird in our own worlds, so that we have even ourselves started to believe in all that. Maybe we are thoughts unchained beyond the spirit of time (but this is pure egocentrism). But we have our own way of doing things, and it has remained the same all our history, and I think it is never going to change. It is a good principle, believe in yourself and do what is your own power, no matter what it is, it is purely you. Fuck all others and their opinions, only you know what works the best way for you".

Which are the moments you are in rapture? Are you able to describe the total rapture?

—"I'd say that when we started to rehearse with Unholy again we felt like rapture, and for partly that reason the album is titled as it is. That word describes the feelings we had pretty well. Like you were reborn or something, enormous feeling of strength. Total rapture? Religious mass-suicide, that's where love and death embrace, something holy and something sexual".

What's your point of view on politics in general? How would the perfect society be?

—"My view of politics is that every person who has been involved in parliamentary institution for more than one year should be executed without a trial. For the crimes against the spirit of life. I despise democracy and believe in enlightened oligarchy, in reasonable totalitarism. One or two idiots in the top positions of the society is better than two hundred of them. And it is easier to find one wise person to run the state than find two hundred or more of them and to expect that they take care of things properly. Perfect societies are the societies of the hunter-gatherers, some of which still exist today. It is the most successful cultural form of human history, since it has survived nearly two million years. But since civilisation has spoiled us, I think that Plato's Republic gives good information how society should be organised. I also admire old African kingdoms, the divine kingship and all its solemn features. It is the purest form of the state, it is natural to man somehow".

What do you remember of your debut album "From the Shadows"? And those moments in Vienna to record it?

—"We had great time for three weeks. It's a pity that the production suffered a bit, but who cares"

"The spring is very suicide-friendly time, at least here in Imatra. During six eeks of time three young people have ended their lives by jumping into a river. That is a pretty good percentage in a town with only 30000 inhabitants...

"The Second Ring Of Power" was your first release in Avantgarde Music. How would you define this second album? Was it definitely a very special album?

—"It is a very special album, for it really shows the best sides of the band. It sounds great even today, even though it was recorded in 1994. Only thing I am disappointed is its bad success, but maybe the stuff was, and still is, too hard to handle for the majority of the audience. But we all love it, and also people in Avantgarde Music were very happy about it. One review in the Finnish music magazine said that it was the gloomiest and most depressive album ever made, so full of angst and evil feelings that it is impossible to sit and listen it through. That was probably the best recognition for the music, even though the person behind the review hated, and still hates, our guts".

Are you still pleased with "Trip to Depressive Autumn" demo? Was your relationship with Wild Rags correct? (I mean: a lot of people had some problems with the american label)

—"That label cheated us too. But it doesn't really matter anymore. But the EP (Depressive...) is original in a sense that it contains some unique versions of our older material. It was OK tape for it bought us our first deal".

What do you want to transmit to the audience during a live appearance? Which are (in your opinion) the most positive aspects of gigs? By the way, I heard, years ago, some gossips about Unholy members destroying Burzum albums on stage... Is it true?

—"We haven't played live since December?94, with Unholy I mean, but maybe will return to gigs after our next release. Gigs are fun and we don't try to give the audience any special feelings or anything like that. We never had any great effects on stage. We'd just go in and beat the hell out of those songs. Sometimes the audience is really hard involved and then everything is easy and great, but sometimes the response is not so enthusiastic, and then the playing does not taste that good. But we always thought that we'll play like hell, no matter what the people do. So it either works or not. Yes, we have destroyed Burzum albums (and others, too!!!) on stage a couple of times. It's not a big deal, but obviously some Black Metal people don't like it. It's their problem, not ours. Like Ismo used to say: "If you have a bunch of shitty albums you don't want to listen, what should you do then? Eat them?" At least destroying stuff is fun, once in a while".

Are you working on new material? How do think that music is going to evolve in the future?

—"Yes we are. We have almost completed the material for our next release, and we are entering the studio in July. There will be more female voice involved, since Veera has joined us on a more permanent basis. We don't really know how this new material is going to sound like, but I bet it will be interesting. The music is straight forward stuff, like in "Rapture", with different kinds of moods. The first pieces of the new material will be available in our homepage, I think".

THE MAN OF THOUSAND FACES

When I'm thinking about multi-active personalities with the ability of modeling their impulses, anxieties, etc throught countless forms; KARSTEN HAMRE is one of the names that cross my mind. Some of you have surely heard of him since years ago... A lot of things happened after Penitent demo. Three full-lenghts have been put into the market under Penitent's banner. He's also active in an entity called Arcane Art, if we're speaking about musical campfires... Penitent gave birth two grandiose albums ("Melancholia", "The beauty of pain"); but we're suffering right now a creeping decline, entitled "As life fades away" which corroborates perfectly that the beauty (of pain) isn't everlasting. "As life fades away" means the end of a chapter. I cannot avoid to look back with nostalgia... Tracks like "Autumn is the beauty of pain" or "Into the great inferno" sent shivers down my spine. "As life fades away" causes on me an enormous yawn. Thanks for showing two sides, Karsten. I'm getting old.

Greeetings Mr. Hamre! Do you remember the first question in Exstinctio Sensus? Well, I'm going to use it but in the opposite way (this doesn't mean I'm going to repeat the whole interview again). You avoid to use your one "pseudonym" anymore (Beastus Rex). Why? Did you want to distance yourself from fictional personalities? Was it time to put the mask off?

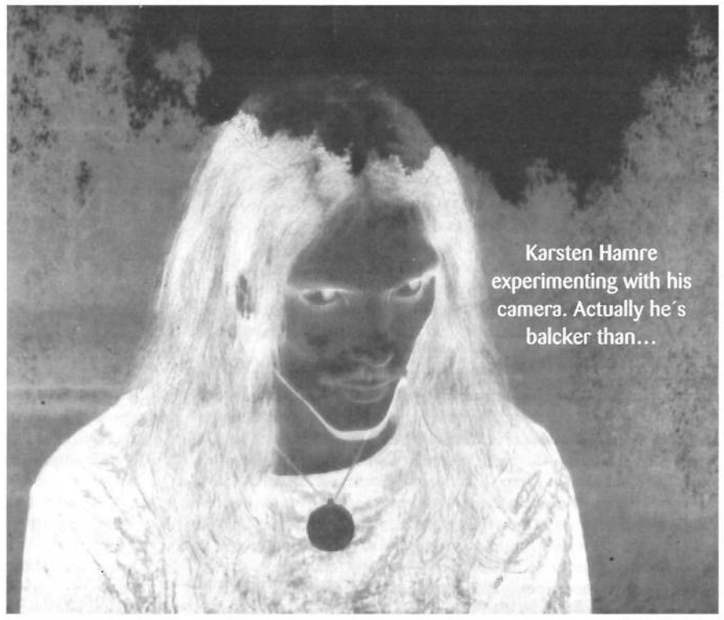
—"As I consider myself as an artist I felt it wasn't appropriate to use a pseudonym anymore, nor did I feel like hiding behind a mask. I want to be acknowledged by my art, with using my own name. One could also say that I wanted to distance myself from fictional personalities, as I am not a fictional character, I am a living being. On the other hand I felt that by using my real name I also would be more respected, beside if I one day were to apply for a fob as a photographer if wouldn't be too good to come in there showing them recordcovers which says that the work has done by "Beastus Rex". That would require quite an explanation I would presume, and to also prevent hassles like that I chose to stop using a pseudonym. I'm better off my real name".

I've always wondered how the heaven you manage to be involved in so many activities at the same time (music, photography, journalism,...)? Doesn't it seem that the words "time is the cruel tyrant..." are not the cradle of your existence?

—"I have through at least the last five years been involved in many things at the same time. I guess it is the kind of person I am. I have too many ideas going through my mind and I feel the urge to do something about them, as otherwise I would go around and focus on the things I should have done, and not what I need to do to put them into life if you know what I mean? I certainly don't feel that "time is the cruel tyrant..." nor should it be that to anybody. To be honest I do think that if you really want to do a thing it is not time that prevent you from doing it, it is rather the will to find the time. On the other hand "money is the cruel tyrant..." as a lot of my ideas would have been put into life sooner if I had financial means to do so".

You had an unpleasant affair with Cold Meat Industry. What happened exactly?

—"There isn't that much to say really, as one a half a year has passed by since Penitent was on Cold Meat. The past remains past and I don't find it too interesting to ramble about things that happened a couple of years ago. That wouldn't be fair to either Karmanik or me. Let's just bury the past and focus on the future instead, as that is far more important from my point of view. Karmanik is really doing a good job with both Cold Meat Industry and Cruel Moon and the line he has chosen from them is quite interesting and worth keeping an eye on in the future. I really like some of the bands on his labels as they represent a style of their own, and are not easily put into a specific category. Diversity and distinctiveness are clue words for the bands on CMI and its sub labels. As usual the packaging and the layout of the releases are extremely good, but that has more or less become a trademark for the Karmanik family... Roger has really turned his label into one of the best around".



Karsten Hamre experimenting with his camera. Actually he´s balcker than...

You've also got a second path to give free reign to your artistical necessities: ARCANE ART. This creation has its origin in two projects (Magistratus and Mortal Insanity). Tell us a little about it. What's the basical concept behind it?

—"The core of the concept Arcane Art was formed on is a quotation by Ken Wilbur which I do think says quite a lot It goes like this: "The point is... to unify and harmonise the opposites, both positive and negative, by discovering a ground which transcends and encompasses them both". To some the concept of Arcane Art might be quite complex. It is more or less divided in two separate parts. One part is the one who control things in order to achieve something close to artistic purity. First I feel it's important to tell why Arcane Art has been put to life, a little bit of the history behind this creation. The former or to be more correct, the creator behind Arcane Art is Karsten Hamre, more known as the founder of Penitent. This creation you know will be introduced to have its origin in two project bands, namely Magistratus and Mortal Insanity. It is also here you can find the reason why Arcane Art has a two-part concept. The impulsive /improvised and uncontrollable has its roots in Magistratus, which one day in April'95 showed up on stage without having rehearsed one single time. The music, which was performed, was industrial & experimental metal, with Mr. Hamre on vocals and additional noise guitar. Mortal Insanity on the other hand represent the part which one has to control in order to create atmospheres of artistic purity, and the music is best described as dark electronic music. Arcane Art is the unity of the two before mentioned projects. In which way this unification will affect you, the public is simple to explain; through album releases, the first a mini album released as 10" picture disc by German Prophecy Productions (the CD version is yet to be released and any label seriously interested can contact me), you will able to experience the part which will work towards artistic purity, and through live-shows you will be able to experience the impulsive and uncontrollable instincts of the creative being. Arcane Art consists of three individuals which makes the line-up as follows: Karsten Hamre-synths, Fredrik Fudelli-vocals, and Bernt Edvard Egeland-drums".

The first official Arcane Art presentation was to be released as a mini album on both CD and LP, but in the end Prophecy only released a 10" Picture Disc (limited to 500 copies). The reason why this mini isn't available on CD is that Prophecy's German distributor InterCord said that they couldn't distribute Arcane Art because "it was nothing but a bad Mortiis copy". Do you have anything to say in response to that accusation? Why do you think that some people automatically identify someone using synths with Mortiis?

—"I must correct this a bit I guess. According to Martin of Prophecy Intercord did claim that Arcane Art was nothing but a bad Mortiis copy, and they couldn't start with more than 150 copies of the MCD, and such a low first order along with their accusation can't be taken as anything else than a sick joke really. And what also puzzles me is that Prophecy on one hand is using slogan like "Not for the industry, but for the Art" or something like that, and on the other hand claimed that the Arcane Art mini couldn't be released on CD because it wasn't commercial/sellable enough! I have no idea why some people automatically compares bands using synths with Mortiis. They surely have no deeper knowledge about this type of music, as if they had they wouldn't have come up with such a comparison in the first place. It's not just Arcane Art that by some has been compared with Mortiis, but also Penitent, and to be honest I think that those who compare either Penitent's or Arcane Art's music with the music of Mortiis better go to the doctor and check their ears, as it is quite clear that they must have a hearing disability..."

What are the messages behind titles like "The Spiral Dance", "Facing The Dawn of Time", "The March of the Universe" and "My destination"?

—"For me it has never been important to focus on what my meaning is, in this case it is not important to point out what the songs reflects to me personally. I like to keep that for myself as it is of a very personal character, and goes very deep. I almost never discuss my feelings with others, but on the other hand I put all of myself into my creations. The most important thing here is what each and every song reflects and represent to the listener. I encourage everyone to find their own meanings in my creations. Trust the feelings that are created within yourself when listening to the songs. They are the only thing that really counts. Let the atmosphere fill your soul and you will find what you're looking for".

This info-sheet reveals that "through liveshows you will be able to experience the impulsive and uncontrollable instincts of the creative being". I have in mind some images o how an Arcane Art concert would look like but... What can you reveal about these both visual and audial performances? Someone told me about a minitour in Germany...

—"So far Arcane Art hasn't done any live performance. This was something I discussed with Martin of Prophecy while we still were on his label, but as we aren't signed to any label now it is quite uncertain when Arcane Art will be performing live. The visuals we do intend to incorporate in a live show is video/film fragments as well as slideshow. This is all I can tell at this very moment, and hopefully it won't take too long before we are seen on a stage!"

> "And what also puzzles me is that Prophecy Productions on one hand is using a slogan like "Not for the industry, but for the art" or something like that, and on the other hand claimed that the Arcane Art mini couldn´t be released on CD because it wasn´t commercial / sellable enough!"

Arcane Art consists of two members: Fredik Fugelli (vocals) and you (synths). Besides, a guitarist and a session drummer are going to join the band. What kind of dimensions do you want to reach with these recently added instruments to Arcane Art's music? What's the role of each member in the band?

—"The addition of guitars does not mean that Arcane Art will go more metal, as we intend to use the guitar more as a means of adding effects in a way that is not possible to achieve with pure electronics, and the addition of drums are done in order to gain more power in the atmosphere of the songs. Maybe even get the songs to kick more. It will be for sure no estándar drumming, rather experimental drumming and percussion works to lift the music into a new dimension".

Martin (Prophecy) is no longer interested in releasing the Arcane Art full-length album. You're now seeking or a label to release the mini album on CD as well as singing the band for one or two full-lengths. The material for the Arcane Art debut album is already finished and ready to be recorded. In what ways the music has developed from the mini LP to the complete album? Are you discovering new territories?

—"The music on the debut album will be more complex and diverse than on the mini album I guess, something that will be an effect of adding guitars and drums, as well as there will be a far wider use of vocal styles, everything from low whispers to grim vocals are most likely to be present on the debut album. Still we do leave an open room for improvisation, which means that not everything is set before we enter the studio. We are constantly discovering new grounds and territories which we do intend to incorporate in our music, but what the result of it will be something you will have to wait for until the album is released which as you probably know is uncertain due to the fact that Arcane Art does not have a label at the time being. Only time will tell!".

Arcane Art is definitely more ethereal and dreamy music. What are the most remarkable differences between Arcane Art and Penitent? Why does the track "My destination" sound so arabian? Did you want to create a kind of mystical aura?

—"Arcane Art is for sure different from Penitent and it wouldn't be much point in having two bands that sounds exactly the same. Would it? Arcane Art's music is as you say more ethereal and dreamy, and I believe that is achieved by using a different instrumentation than I have done in Penitent, such as horn, oboe, bells, fuzz synth, etc. One might say that Arcane Art is more unearthly in music and lyrics and the atmosphere of the songs express, whilst Penitent might be more earthly related. So you think "My destination" sound arabian? Well to be honest I have never thought of that song in that way, but I do agree with you that the song has a kind of mystical aura. The only thing we wanted to do on the mini album was to create different chapters when it comes to the songs atmospheres, which I do believe we have been able to do. As I see it in the three different chapters are represented as follows: Chapter One-"The Spiral Dance", Chapter Two-"Facing The Dawn of Time" & "The March Of The Universe", and Chapter Three-"My Destination".

It's time to do some questions regarding the new Penitent album "As Life Fades Away"... I was quite curious about your most recent creation but I must say that "As Life..." is not what I expected of a third Penitent release. It's just neo-classical reminiscences; it lacks of the tragical and emotional atmosphere of its predecessors ("Melancholia", "The Beauty Of Pain"). Why an instrumental album? Where's your voice's magnetism?

—"Several times through the years Penitent has existed I have been asked how important the poems are to Penitent, and if they would be essential for Penitent. The answer to that I guess is given with this album. Penitent's existence does for sure not rely upon whether or not poetry and vocals are included in the songs, as music has always been the major part of Penitent with the addition of spoken words. The reasons for including the poems when there are no vocals is simply because I felt the urge to present music and poetry in a combination that Penitent hasn't done before. "As Life Fades Away" are more like a classical album, and the music on the

new album does indeed have a relatively traditional classical form, which is expressed through the use of rather melodic instruments, whether it be a piano, a violin, or a flute that blend well with the harmonic elements of the orchestra. Nevertheless is how I wanted to make it, based on what I would enjoy listening to, and that others enjoy the music too is just an enormous plus for me! "As Life Fades Away" is a different album, in fact I think Penitent has released three different albums. So far I can see that there is a huge difference in how people feel for this album. Some say this is the best, and some say "The Beauty Of Pain" is best, and still there are some saying that "Melancholia" is the best Penitent album. If I were only to please the public I guess I would have made an album which would have had elements from both that 1st and 2nd album, but this is not why I am making music. I make music to first and foremost please myself, and thereafter present it to the public. If they will like what I present is completely different matter. After all I am an artist, and my art is a creation and definitely NOT a product!".

As mentioned each movement contains a poem of yours although they are not recited this time. Have you pretended to give music an exclusive relevance (eclipsing the lyrical side)?

—"I just wanted to do an instrumental album, and so I did. There is really not more to it than that I did what I felt was right at the moment, and I will continue to do as I please. In fact I have recorded some instrumental remises/re-arrangements of songs taken from "Mealncholia" and "The Beauty Of Pain" (3 from each album) and these I intent to get released along with at least two previously unreleased tracks, also instrumental. This does not mean that Penitent will be instrumentalized for the future. This special album most likely carry the title "When Darkness Descends", but as the previous contact expired with the new album I cannot say when this album will come out. I do doubt that you will hear me doing the vocals on a Penitent album again, that is unless I decide to use Norwegian lyrics again. Though there will be vocals on the albums coming in the future (except "When Darkness Descends"), but at the time being I cannot reveal who the new vocalist will be. In addition a drummer and one more keyboardist is most likely to join any day. This addition of members is needed as I intend to play live with Penitent, and it's quite obvious that I can't do all on myself on a stage. That requires more people".

It seems tht your principal idea for "As life..." is something like a "revival" of classical moments. I personally think tht this has been a big mistake because you'll never reach the purity of classical music with a synthesiser. Your defence against these lines...

—"As said before I just did the album the way I felt was the right way, and created what I enjoyed listening to, nothing more and nothing less. If that is your opinion fair enough, as you are entitled to say what you like. I just don't feel there is a need to defend myself, I did what I did, that's it. If people like it that is great, if they don't... fine by me. One really can't expect everyone to like what one creates, nor has that ever been my intention with Penitent, or my art".

The title of your new album is quite significative. In my opinion, a part of your source of inspiration is also fading away. It's not a problem to go on producing more discs, it's more that you might not create delicacies in the level of "The Beauty Of Pain". Your new defence against these words...

—"I do for sure not what the future will bring, do you? I must also point out that I do not intend to create another "The Beauty Of Pain" album, as I feel it is useless. On the other hand I try to explore new grounds that will take the music of Penitent to a higher level, and create something which is far better than "T.B.O.P.". Time will tell!".

"Those who compare either Penitent´s or Arcane Art´s music with the music of Mortiis better go to the doctor and check their ears as it is quite clear that they must have a hearing disability..."

You're now the only responsible of music, poems,... Asbjorn showed to be a skilled musician. Why his departure?

—"Asbjorn left Penitent because he was no longer interested in spending so much time and energy as it was required of him in order to stay in the band. He simply wouldn't dedicate enough of himself in the future of the band, and that is the reason for his departure. One shouldn't underestimate his importance in Penitent in the period he was in the band, but after all he wasn't so important that the whole existence of Penitent relied him alone. He is a part of the band that belongs to the past, and now I only have to care about the future. Penitent continues and only the future will what that will be like. Asbjorn on the other hand has as far as I know recently joined Gehenna, after Sarcana (the synth/keyboardist) left the band, so he is still active with music". There's no risk to consider Penitent "The Beauty Of Pain" the most brilliant piece into Penitent's career; its depressive atmosphere is simply fantastic (it sounds rather cliché... Who cares?. These last words taken from the end of the end of the first song could be one of the keys to caress the core of its release"... its sadness only makes me stronger, hour after hour... just to experience the beauty of pain". Which of your negative feelings are more reflected? What are the most beautiful aspects of pain?

—"Darkness, grief, sorrow, depression, etc is not what I would call negative feelings, so I wouldn't say that the album reflects negative feelings! It's mainly society and people in general that deem them to be negative as a result of fear. It's just as death. People see death as a negative thing simply because they fear death, but hey, death can be a beautiful thing, and the symbols of death can be seen and interpreted in different ways. The most beautiful aspect of pain might be the fact that it is through pain both spiritually and in the flesh that you know that you are really alive!".

Then... Would it be senseless to think that some parts in "The Beauty Of Pain" have served of contrasts of negativity?

—"As far as I see things there are no negative feelings or contrasts. It all has to do with how one decides to use the feelings. That which does not destroy me makes me stronger!".

By the way, What does the front-cover of "The Beauty Of Pain" suppose to represent?

—"The cover shows my own version of The Grim Reaper, the soul collector which to me represents the beauty of the darkside. I would say that The Grim Reaper is the Gatekeeeper of the underworld. I chose this image in order to point out that there indeed is a beauty in darkness, a beauty that the common man does not want to see, nor is everybody capable of finding the beauty which the shadowside of life has to offer. It might not be an easy task to grasp this meaning by only looking at the cover. The individual who sees it has to of deeper and interpret it in relation to the title. It has to be studied, experienced and most of all felt".

On the other hand, Genocide Magazine is now a closed chapter. What are your conclusions of the two issues pressed? Has Genocide offered a constructive gust of reflection (I mean: all those non-music articles)?

—"I do think Genocide offered something that other magazines didn't and therefore got recognised in a way I am sure it wouldn't have if it just followed the path other magazines followed and still follows!".

I'm not going to ask you again about your problems after the release of Genocide·#1. The simple question would be: What's the lesson learnt in those experiences?

—"I did learn that the freedom of speech is limited, if not a joke. One does not have freedom of speech when one talk about matters that aren't approved by the society. I haven't changed my views that much by the incidents, rather developing stronger believes".

You've started up a new web-based magazine named The Zodiac Chronicle. Tell us about this new project and if there are some differences in contrast with Genocide?

—"The Zodiac Chronicle is more focused o music as art I guess, and the intention is to feature all kinds of dark art, in the widest sense of the term Art! In The Zodiac Chronicle you will find interviews, articles, poems, short stories, scene reports, reviews, as well as by time there will be added presentations of various underground artists. For those who would like to have a look at this web magazine go to-http//centrum.is/stefanpm/thezodiac".

You're also able to express yourself visually through Photography. What are the most fascinating points of this art? What about your plans for short movie/film clips?

—"It is the motifs, the many sceneries that are interesting, and then all kinds, and it is the scenery and motifs that are the Art as what would the photo be without a motif? Nothing, that's for sure. With talents and skills it is the photographers job and intention to bring the beauty of the motif to the fore. First and foremost you need a talent, but you also need to know how to operate with your camera as well as how you're going to use the lights. It is for sure not enough to buy good and expensive equipment. A really good piece of photographic art has just as many emotions involved in it as all other forms of art that I know of. After all that is what make some photos better than others. As a matter of fact there has already been released a two clip video entitled "Fragments of neo-classical Art". The film was shot on a 8 mm film, because the director (Bernt) had this vision, a magnificent one if one ask me, that with the use of a 8 mm one would be able to create a more old fashioned look than one would be able to achieve with the new equipment. This I guess is because he is highly inspired by European Avantgarde films made in the 60's such as works of Godard as well as the American legend Andy Warhol and other independent directors world-wide. The actors appearing in the video have experiences in several theatre productions such as Macbeth, and several vampire plays in the tradition of theatre Grand Guignol. The short movie for "Det Sorte Tjern" was shot in two days on various locations, such in the surroundings of the Cathedral in the middle of town (Stavanger). The short-movie for "Into the great inferno" consists of clips taken from old shootings Bernt have done through the years, which he was in his archive. At the time being Bernt is working as a producer for a theatre group. Together we are also working on a video production in the tradition of Grand Guignol and Laterna Magica. This production has been entitled "When Darkness Descends".

"Darkness, grief, sorrow, depression, etc is not what I would call negative feelings, so I wouldn´t say that the album reflects negative feelings! It´s mainly society and people in general that deem them to be negative as a result of fear..."

"The most beautiful aspect of pain might be the fact that it is through pain both spiritually and in the flesh that you know that you are really alive!"

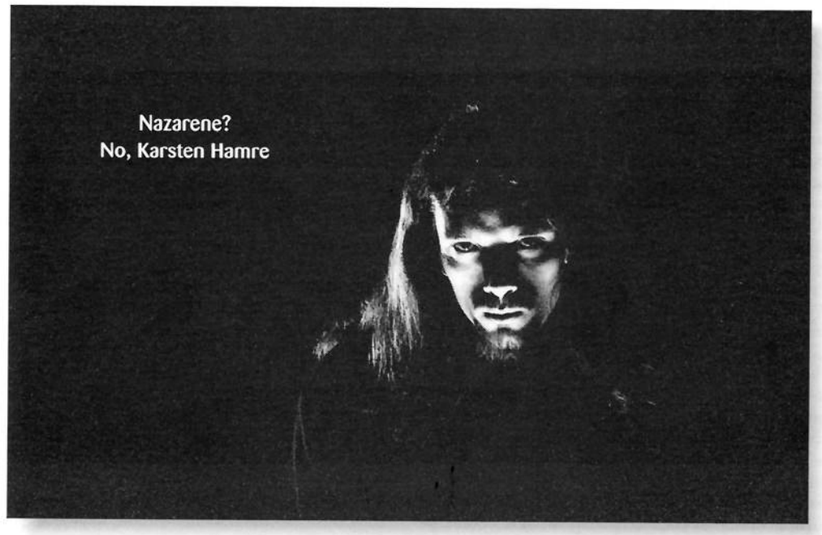
"If I were only to please the public I guess I would have made an album which would have had elements from both the 1st and 2nd album, but that is not why I´m making music. I make music first and foremost please myself and thereafter present it to the public. If they will like what I present is completely different matter. After all, I am an Artist, and my art is a creation and definitely NOT a product!"

Prophecy Productions released "Melancholia" as limited LP edition (I'm afraid I cannot assure this because I didn't order any copy of this version). What's the format that fits better for Penitent's sound? What does the different cover show?

—"Prophecy did release "Melancholia" on Picture Disc (limited to 500 copies) as well as a re-release on CD was issued with 3 bonustracks (demoversions of "I Det Uendelige", "Veien" and "Stille"). The new cover is a picture taken in the surroundings of the Cathedral in Stavanger. It is a rather atmospheric architectural picture I guess. I think Penitent's music is both good for CD and Vinyl!".

There are some good news at this point... No more questions! If I've forgotten something, use this space...

—"Thanks for the interview Raúl and for your support of my bands. It is good to see that there still are people like you around. I guess most is said already in my answers, but if people want to get in touch they can write me, either through regular mail or via email. Thanks again, and good luck with your magazine".



L'ART POUR L'ART

As simple as this. Yes, there are lost of pseudo-labels claiming to be devoted solely to the music art. It's a cool form to play to the gallery, but you perfectly know that these are inflated words. In 99 per cent of cases, money suddenly tear to pieces pure love for music. Luckily, there're a few labels portraying my dreamlike (?) idea of how things should be. Prophecy's accomplishing harmony of pragmatic way of business and passionate dedication for the essence (Urmm, I've heard this word before...) of art. As you've already noticed, avid reader, I've been collecting interviews with most of Prophecy bands (Empyrium, Oberon, Naervaer, etc). Is Inner Essence a monographic issue of Prophecy Productions? Doesn't it seem like a "contradiction" of so-called independence? Prophecy fits perfectly with the concept of this thin piece of (wasted?) paper. The next logical step would be to let you know a bit more about the man behind a still small but promising label. Who's that guy? Martin Koller.

It's crystal clear that the market is saturated by countless bands, labels, zines,... Which were your motivations to found Prophecy Productions? Did you want to make a gap between the established mediocrity?

—"The motivation was basically because of my love to music. And you are right- Prophecy Productions releases are hopefully a very good alternative to the established mediocrity- at least the artists and I think so. I don't like the common abusive use a word like "elite" or "supreme" these days for every estándar stuff, nevertheless I think my releases are at least not ages away from these attributes".

Martin (left) and Markus (Empyrium) during a business-lunch in Wittlich. Romantic union?

Prophecy took the first step as a distribution service. What do you remember of that period? Any difference between you and the rest of distributors?

—"No, I don't remember anything special from the period of being just distributor: I don't think that my distribution was anything special at all, it was more something to gather experience in the "music business" and getting contacts to a lot of people which also were in the business. So it was very useful both contact-wise and financially to start a label later. Nevertheless, I think I wouldn't have had the courage to start a label without the knowledge of business I gained during that period of time".

Everybody knows the past of Germany and the decisive consequences on other European countries... Anyway, I would like to know your personal reflection about the most important events in the most recent past of Germanic history.

—"I guess you refer in your question to Adolf Hitler's dictatorship, the Second World War and his causes. A very complex and wide filed, so I think without a more specific subject in this large field I am no able to give you a service-able statement. Maybe only a brief one: One of the causes of the abusing of Germanic symbols, customs and culture in Hitler's dictatorship is that being based on Germanic culture, symbols and customs is often seen today as something indecent, provocative or even criminal Paradox!".

Entering to a more personal field... Are you able to define briefly your own personality? Do you always see the realistic way of life? Do you normally listen to the opinions of people close to you?

—"I try to relate to honour, respect and honesty as well. I don't believe I am a pragmatic character at all, I hope I manage to live by the values I hold high. Compared to most other people, I think I am very reflected concerning my life which is like a constant pushing of a knife in your open wounds like one of my friends said. This reflection and going in-depth is often discouraging and hard... We suffer from our own wisdom! I think I pay attention to the opinions of my friends, otherwise the friendship would be of less use".

Which values of German society would you point out? If you had the opportunity to change some things of your country... What would you do?

—"I think German people are basically much related to discipline, rules and duties. Preussen never dies! Seriously, it has both its positive and negative aspects, but at least circumstances like f.i. in Italy with their postal strikes (which causes no mail delivery for some people for more than weeks) would be impossible in Germany. What would I change in Germany? The most important human characteristics for me are honour, respect and honesty. So it would like to see people behave related to this virtues. But the mass of human sheeps is unreflected and superficial anyway, so why care about them?".

You've stated that Prophecy has focused on the few bands that have the ability to play original and quality music far from masses of boring groups... Would you mind writing some aspects of Prophecy's philosophy (an the most relevant aims too)?

—"The essence of the Prophecy Productions philosophy is to spread marvellous art to marvellous people".

How is the work organised at Prophecy (manufacturing, promotion,...)? How many people are involved in it? Do you have to finance everything by yourself? Are you receiving assistance from organisations?

—"I am the one who works fix in Prophecy Productions at the moment. I care normally about everything, but I enjoy the help of a graphic designer and several people who care about mail-order, packaging, mailings and other stuff. In summer Marco Steinmtz will start working here, but basically you can say Prophecy Productions is Martin Koller. I finance everything by myself and receive no help from wealthfare or other organisations. I couldn't accept that because that would mean loosing my independence and authority in my label's matter".

All bands released in Prophecy Productions contain a few similar concepts. What kind of ingredients should a group have to sign with your label? You haven't released any B.M product so far, so the logical and simple question must be... Why?

—"No. Important points to consider a band for Prophecy Productions are intelligence, dedication and quality (most important, obviously). I think that's all, but nevertheless much to fulfil. There a lot of other important points, but these are somehow more or less connected to these three mentioned attributes. The reason is simple- all the Black Metal bands good enough to be signed on Prophecy Productions (f.i. groups like Ulver, Emperor, Burzum, Mysticum) are signed to other labels. Also it is difficult for a more or less uprising and not fully established label (like Prophecy Productions is at the moment) to sign any of these bands as the will certainly receive offers from far more established record labels if they are without record deal. Most of the new bands are without identity-they just copy the established bands without having a least a few own ideas, so they are worthless for me".

You have a good relationship with the first band you've produced: Empyrium. Let us know the reasons to offer them a contract. How has the audience reacted to "A Wintersunset..." ? What about sales?

—"Yes, we have a very close and friendly relationship. Their music and characters were similar to the values I aimed for my label as a start. The release of "A Wintersunset..." album was a very good start for Prophecy Productions, sales and reactions from the audience were quite positive and stimulating to continue the label".

Are you putting more effort to promote Empyrium than the rest? In other words: Do they have a slight "preference"?

My answer is a slight yes. Why? I think it is something similar to your first girlfriend. It will always remain something remarkable and special in your life. So with Empyrium. They were the first band on Prophecy Productions- the dedication, enthusiasm and even pride of having published such fantastic music as a start is something very special. So Empyrium and their music will always stay as something really outstanding in the history of Prophecy Productions"

How much time of your daily life are you spending in the label? Do you dedicate the few hours you have left for the different activities (nothing in common with Prophecy)?

—"Prophecy Productions is my full-time job, so I spend between 6 and 14 hours each day in my office. The spent time always depends on how burn out you are after a certain time. Especially when activities like creating concepts & texts for advertisement, flyers and designs or writing letters is really hard and burns you out during a quite short time. But there are also things like reading magazines (at least good ones) and judging music (it goes here the same as before) which are not that hard and are helping to regain mental strength and energy for the other work. Besides Prophecy Productions, I do regularly sports and am also involved in the board of directors of a local sport club. Basically I think I live a very secluded life, I almost never go out- especially since I split with my girlfriend. When I am at home I normally read books or newspapers or listen to some music. I also intend now to rejoin my study of economy at the university of Trier, but only half day per week".

"I think German people are basically much related to discipline, rules and duties. Preussen never dies!"

"...But the mass of human sheeps is unreflected and superficial anyway, so Why care about them?"

"This reflection and going in-depth is often very discouraging and hard... We suffer from our own wisdom!"

But there are also things like reading magazines (at least good ones) and judging music (it goes here the same as before) which are not that hard and are helping to regain mental strength and energy for the other work"

You signed the Norwegian outfit Naervaer. In fact, readers have the opportunity to read an interview with them in Inner Essence, but... How did your interest arise to offer them a contract? Do you think that the appearance of Jan (In the Woods...) on vocals will increase the selling?

—"The demo-tape of Naervaer convinced me musically, concept-wise as well as the people involved did. If Jans appearance will increase the sales? The vocals of Jan are great, so for sure it will help the sales more than you have a bad vocalist! But I know what the point of your question is. I will not market and publish Naervaer as some kind of "featuring In the Woods... member" project, etc... Naervaer is something unique and individual, so there's no need to compare them to other bands. Naervaer don't need to rely on other bands success, they will go their own individual way. At least they should, as their songs are amazingly high quality and hopefully their label's work also!".

As mentioned on the second question Prophecy Productions has also a mail-order. There are some interesting titles, though I'm sure that you are not totally into the music of some tapes, CDs,... distributed. Is this a connection with the usual "trade-business" around? A friend of yours told me that you are only going to get stuff that you really find interesting: Is it correct?

—"I did my mail-order to get rid of trade-items I got without taking care too much about their quality. It was just a tool to achieve better sales with my own releases. But now I changed my mail-order policy and have sold out all the crappy records of the past which was quite drastic by the way- imagine a change from about 400 to 40 different titles. So my mail-order has now a very small section, but all items are approved by me".

Do you have any "problems" to find distributors who are able to pay and reach record-stores? I've read that your distributor in Germany (Intercord Record Service) could not distribute Arcane Art mini album on CD as "It was nothing but a bad Mortiis copy? What can you say about it?

—"It gets better and better. Now I have distributors in almost all "important" countries which are reliable and able to sell & pay decent amounts of records. To the rumour about Arcane Art- it's not true and more a misunderstanding of Karsten Hamre who stopped now to spread it".

How do you see Prophecy evolution from the beginning until now? What about future prospects?

—"The feeling is more or less the same as in the past. For sure, all the "machinery" gets better and better all the time. I get more and more experience in the "business" and that helps to sell more records. But the most important is anyway my dedication, enthusiasm and love for art, which will hopefully help me to release and spread more excellent records in the future".

Thanks for your patience and attention. I hope that my questions didn't bore you.

—"Many thanks for the opportunity to promote me and Prophecy Productions and their most important values in Inner Essence! I think you put much effort into these questions, so that it was very interesting as well as inspiring to reflect about your given subjects".

chaos

DO YOU DARE TO TRESSPASS THE THRESHOLD OF AMBIGUITY?

Oberon could be considered a paradigm of beauty, "dark" beauty... a testimony of opposites. Its music is like a trip to an enigmatic and enchanting forgotten place where you'll tackle spiritual encounters with your other self. This "band" (Nooo, it doesn't fit here!) was conceived by Baar Titlestad; a man who also spend his days working for a small publishing house in his home-town (Stavanger) specialising primarilyin the Viking Age and Cold War History. Besides, he's been involved with organising a seminar on various important Euro-political/Economic issues (Not about party politics, but communication, enterprise and similar things). The following interview covers most of what needs to be said of Oberon and Mr. Titlestad at the moment, so I have no plausible argument in going on... Just adding that if there's any problem for you to find "Oberon", "To Spring" and "Mysteries", don't hesitate to contact with Mr. Efficiency (Martin Koller of Prophecy Productions. The guy who should send me some cash for doing such full cover of his record company). He'll kindly attend to you.

I must admit that the first news about your band came through Mr. Koller (Prophecy).He sent me a kind of biography so there's no point is asking typical questions... I would like to know your different motivations to start with Oberon.

—"There isn't really much to say about the early days of Oberon. Since my early years I have been involved in music but it was not until 1993 or 1994 that Oberon began taking shape. My motivation was simply a broken heart The rest is rather boring and the whole concept of Oberon has changed so drastically that it is no longer any point in looking back. I still occasionally listen "Through Time & Space" but those times, the people and the things we liked to do have just passed away with time. The music and lyrics I did back then was just a reflection of me and my feelings. Nothing else".

Listening to your music, I can get a slight idea about how you are. Anyway, Would you be able to describe your own personality? Do you expect anything special from this earthly existence?

—"Well, I guess I am pretty sober and upright guy, very moody but quite good on sunny days... I am very obsessive, passionate, dedicated to what I like, indifferent to things I don't like and deeply intolerant to things I can't stand. I am very sincere person. I think what a person does here, now, will lay the foundation for things to come. It is always up to yourself to find your own path through life and follow it with vigour and dedication".

"Through Time & Space" was your debut demo, right? Could you make any comments about it? How many copies were printed and distributed?

—"I had been working on some tracks for a while. I had some friends over to hear their reaction, and they encouraged me to release it publicly. I did, but in a limited edition of about 100 copies. There is much desperation on that tape, and its contents were touching upon things that greatly affected my life and my environment at that time. As a result of that, I didn't pay so much attention to spreading it around except for sending out copies to people I knew or had been recommended to get in contact with. Later, I have learned that "Through Time & Space" began to circulate among tape traders around the world, who have in one way or another helped spreading my name. My thanks to them, whoever and wherever they are".

By the way, any specific meaning behind Oberon?

—"Actually it has its origin in the French, early 12th Century poem, "Huon de Bordeaux". However, I discovered the name during a late night browse through some star maps. It is the fourth moon of Uranus, which I later discovered had a special attachment to myself. I believe that it was destiny that brought it to my attention. The universe has always fascinated me. Its vastness, mystery and solemnity has kept me enthralled for as long as I can remember".

You seem to be the only responsible for Oberon. Is there any established line-up or just session musicians? Do you consider it a personal project?

—"Oberon is my vision. I write the music and the lyrics and I usually play all the instruments myself as well. In my new album, however, I worked with session musicians on drums, clarinet and oboe. When I first started with music I wanted to play the drums, but instead I went on to clarinet, piano, tuba and guitar. I've forgotten most of what I did except for the guitar and piano which are my main instruments now. So I basically hire musicians to do the parts I can't play. I mean, I can play them on the keyboard, but I really dislike the idea of doing for instance wind instruments with a keyboard. The soul and the feeling a live musician puts into his performance can not be reproduced by any synth or sampler. But in essence, Oberon is a so called one-man band, and yes, it's all very personal. I write about things that happen in my life, my dreams and my obsessions. I've always done that, and I can't really see that change".

In early 1995, you released your second demo, "Lily White". Comment on that second effort, please. Bio says "Lily White" is based on a poem about the artist's encounter with death and dreams and beauties of a distant paradise.

—"Yes, I was supposedly to write a short story over the above mentioned subject, but at the time I had already written the first stanzas for a poem with the same title. These were "Lily White" as on the "Oberon" album. Is death anything but the disappointments and sadness of life that finally tops our weary hearts, or is it the ascension from misery to eternal sleep in the lap of the white goddess? It is a song about magic, illusion, sensuality and fear. The short story was never completed. But I wrote a large poem from those few lines.

Baard and a good friend...

What is your personal point of view about death? Do you believe in a higher dimension?

—"I basically think death too incomprehensible for man to understand".

Do you need any special conditions (and moods) to create the compositions for Oberon? When do you use to catch the adequate inspiration?

—"Inspiration comes when it comes. I can't force myself to write. As opposed to writing lyrics, I rarely write music in affection. When I am going through disappointments and rough times I don't really write music at all. But my songwriting feeds from misery and joy in the way that after a certain period of time these impressions and feelings come back to me and force themselves down on tape. So I usually try to tape different pieces of music that just come out, so that at a later stage I can put them together into the structure of a proper song. I usually need a clear and focused mind to write and arrange good songs. But occasionally I am taken over by such a deep longing for something I can not grasp. That is the perhaps when I do my best piano songs. Because playing the piano gives me some kind of inner tranquillity but at the same time invokes these extreme feelings of loneliness and longing... When writing for the piano I always feel like flying over a vast ocean, or standing by the seashore gazing into the horizon. I an planning to do an album with music for piano and wind instruments. I did two songs for "Mysteries" which is basically just me playing the piano, but I write music all the time, and when I have enough songs to choose from, I'll do that album. But like I said, writing music is not just drifting away on tender waves of melancholy. It is also a lot of hard work that demands discipline and concentration. As I've said elsewhere, there is a time for sadness and a time for writing music".

You were asked to create a musical environment for a theatre performance. It would be interesting of you could sum up the most essential clues of the mentioned assignment.

—"I can't remember the title. But it was a play about a relationship between a priest, an injured girl and a homosexual. I was supposed to create musical scenery for the performance. I met the producers an the actors, and it seemed as if they were really interested in my teaming up with them, but due to time problems, I had to turn it down. Last year, I was asked to do some music for a documentary, which I think is great, because I have always wanted to do music for the screen. But, at the moment, everything seems to be on a stand still. The guys who are making the movie have like 30 hours of raw film footage, but they have problems with raising the money to complete it. But I had already recorded some of the music, so I decided to put it on "Mysteries" instead".

> "...There is a small flicker of light inside us –which is creativity, love devotion... and to show how fragile we are, to show this light in the face of scourge which is mankind, mass-(anti) culture, you name it... This pain is your pain. And it´s death is the death of all."

You finally signed your first record deal on Italian label Regress Records and the result was "Oberon" MCD. I've read, it had a lack of decent distribution. Do you regret signing with Regress? Anyway, Which were the reactions about "Oberon"?

—"No, I don't regret signing with Regress. What came out of our collaboration, despite poor promotion and distribution, was a very good album that received great response from all kinds of people. A good thing is that I managed to reach a lot of different people because its genuinity, and not because it belongs to a certain genre".

You have signed a new deal with Prophecy Productions which includes a repress of the MCD. Are there any differences between the first version and the new one? (I mean: layout, photos,...) In what ways have you been benefited from being on Prophecy Productions actually?

—"Yes, the re-issue comes with a slightly different cover. I have signed a contract for an LP version of this album. It is tempting to do some re-mixes and put it out with previously unreleased material from that period, but we will first have to see how "Mysteries" does. In between "Oberon" and my new album, I also did some recordings with other people which is too good to just sift away in my archive. Also there are some tracks which were recorded before "Oberon" that were never mixed properly. An LP would be the perfect opportunity to bring that music back to life".

The lyrics included on the MCD have a very sensitive touch. Any "secret" for these emotions transferred into words? Are they just a reflection of your self? Could you explain the hidden message in "I am the rose and the apocalypse"" (a fragment taken from the song. "L.I.T.L.O.W."?

—"No, there's no secret. I don't really think too much about it. I mean, it's poetry. It all derives from the same source which is my life and my thoughts. Just like I don't spend much time thinking about how fantastic it is that we are all earth-bound by gravity. I don't need to do some kind of analysis of my work, because I know what I write about. What's really cool is the fact that people like yourself find my lyrics sensitive or beautiful, and that you are able to communicate with my work. That's the whole point in releasing my music in the first place, at least that's how I look upon it. One day, a friend and myself were walking through this old cemetery. On our way we passed this statue of Jesus standing with his arms stretched out and the inscription "He Is The Light Of The World". I think it is a very powerful image, an image which I have always associated with the apocalypse and the end of mankind. That's how I got the idea for "L.I.T.L.O.T..", which is basically a message of contempt for the world we live in. The idea was that there is a small flicker of light inside us- which is creativity, love, devotion,... all which is positive in away- and to show how fragile we are, to show this light is in the face of the scourge which is mankind, mass-(anti)culture, you name it... It is basically saying that this is the Centre of the universe. This pain is your pain. And it's death is the death of all".

The second track ("The Nightingale") reminds me in some parts of Dead Can Dance. Do you agree? Which bands have a bigger influence in your music (in the case that...)? Note: I am not saying that your music is comparable to D.C.D.

—"Well, I don't think there are many similarities between Oberon and Dead Can Dance. But everyone is entitled to their opinion, and if someone finds the atmospheres conveyed through my music comparable to D.C.D., then that's ok. Although I am not drawing much influence from music, I listen to all kind of strange stuff, and I find a lot of inspiration in music in general. The music of bands/artists such as Current 93, Sol Invictus, The Tear Garden, Rachmaninow, Shostacovich, Arvo Pärt, David Bowie, etc.. etc... has really touched my heart and re-kindled the want to create in dark hours".

I'm going to refer one more time to the bio, with the following sentence: "Oberon is a dream that will stand as statement of purity and beauty until the end of the world...". What's your proper definition of purity and beauty? Do you think there will be a near "apocalypse"?

—"Purity and beauty... These are things that can not and should not be defined, but felt in one's heart. And yes, we live in the apocalypse now. Mankind eats itself. Slowly and cruelly squeezing the life out of any decent being, art, culture, nature... I rarely watch TV or read the daily news anymore because it's always the same. Junkies, rapists, murderers, gangs, racism, frauds... the journalists revel in it, and leftists seem to out level each other in screaming out sympathy for people who should have been locked away years ago. This society is sick and I have only contempt for it. Although that does not mean that I expect Jesus coming down from the sky with a flaming sword sticking out of his mouth".

Can you give me hints of the second official release, "To Spring"? Do you consider "To Spring" a progression from "Oberon"?

—"To Spring will come out in August. It will have two songs from the new Oberon album plus a previously unreleased song dating back from a live session in 1995. Shortly after "To Spring" my new CD, "Mysteries" will be released. What else can say? Now, basically two years after the initial release of "Oberon", it's quite hard to talk about that album. I consider it a stage which I have lived through and surpassed. "Mysteries" took me two years to complete, and I think you can really hear that. "To Spring" will more or less be some kind of teaser as to what people can expect when they buy the actual album. The title track off the single, "To Spring", is based on lyrics excerpted from the poem "To Spring" by William Blake. I had already written some of the music and then Blake's words just seemed to fit in perfectly. It is a hymn to the spring, to youth and to beauty. The other tracks, "Mysteries" and "Ruins & Angels" are more acoustic trips to through dreamlike, melancholy soundscapes with a very dark and psychedelic edge. As I said, "Ruins..." dates back to the summer 1995 when a few friends and myself recorded some music of mine. This material was written at the same time as "L.I.T.O.T.W." and was supposed to be on "Oberon". That never happened, though, and since this particular recording, which was done on an 8-track recorder, is so full of eerie and wonderful moods I'd regret if it didn't come out. It features Oddi Hestnes (ex –Eridu The Arcane) on bass, Pal Asle Pettersen (Red Flower) on keys and myself on guitar and vocals".

Feel free to express something in the way you want. Thanks for your time, Baard.

—"Thank you Raúl".

CROWN OF AUTUMN: "... I FEEL THE WORD METAL A BIT LIMITING!"

And their biography revealed "musically Crown of Autumn creates a personal sound by combining epic and gothic atmospheres with black and medieval touches". I've noticed that some people's got a bad habit of using the word "Gothic" every single time (dyslexic problems?). Where's the connection in between this spoilt term and C.O.A.'s music? There's no way beyond by understanding... Let's put it into the coffin for the time being. Well, one sunny and beautiful day I received a pretty package containing "The treasures arcane" which " is a musical and lyrical journey within the realms of Autumn...". Crown of Autumn (or "The Dragonesque order") achieved a "foamy" cocktail of metallic passages and classic moments. Believe me, it doesn't leave a bad taste in one's mouth. After an epic introduction ("Equinox") of 29 seconds, "Towers of Doleful Triumph" bursts like a thunder but after a while but after a while an acoustic part put it in appearance. Then it puzzled me... Urmm, I've heard it before! Yahh, it's a classic arrangement which was also played by Ritchie Blackmore on his Blackmore's Night "Shadow of the moon" CD (Ritchie's version rules!). C.O.A. tried to create (in the whole album) a mystical atmosphere but with a heavier approach. Emanuele and Diego blended their different vocal styles with a more than decent result. Special mention also to the drummer who did a very good work. Efficient production, good sound,... nothing of importance to complain. For sure, I'm not proud of my questions; nevertheless Emmanuele's effort was near to zero (maybe he prefers music speak for itself). I really hope that you find something interesting here.Sometimes...

Crown of Autumn received proposal of well-known labels from France... but "Treasures Arcane" has been released through your own label called Elnor Productions. Do you want to have a total control of your product? What are the prospects for the debut album?

—"You're right! I created Elnor Productions because I wanted to have a total control on Crown of Autumn's works. Nevertheless Elnor is interested in other bands devoted to Epic, Gothic, Black, Death, Medieval-Folk, Ambient and any other kind of atmospheric music. Bands and distros can contact us at the following address. Elnor Productions, Via Teulie 7, 20123 Milano, Italy. Fax: 2/58317407".

It's evident that you are rather interested in artistical manifestations of our country. How would you compare Italian culture with the different cultures of other counties in Europe? In what ways have influenced in your personality?

—"Because of its geographical position. Italy has always been influenced by other countries form the barbarian tribes of the Northern an Middle Europe to the Northafrican travellers. Italian artists have mixed all these influences together to create unique artistic operas which are manifestations of the highest equilibrium and zest".

The layout of "Treasures Arcane" shows images of Italian artists. Have these images an especial with the concept of the album? Do you pretend to show foreigners the "hidden treasures"...?

—"The images that we used for our booklet have no special connection with our concept. They just harmonise with the music and atmospheres of the album. These images are just symbols of an ideal golden past which I think is more imaginary than historical".

Back to Elnor Productions, Has it been created with the only purpose to produce "Treasures Arcane"? If not, do you have something impending in mind?

—"As I said before, Elnor is interested in other bands, not only Crown of Autumn, but for the moment I'm not going to produce any stuff".

Which band/s would you offer them a contract to? Is there any Italian band that will "surprise" us in the near future?

—"I like few bands from Italy but they're under other labels. Anyway, I would suggest bands like Agarthi, Ancient Poetry, Rhapsody and Cultus Sanguine".

Your first demo ("Ruins") was created after three months of rehearsals and it had a good response. What aspects of "Ruins" are more appreciated by the fans, mags,...? How would you describe the differences between "Ruins" and "Treasures Arcane"?

—"The most appreciated sides of "Ruins" are the professional sound and artwork, musical maturity and personality. "The Treasures Arcane" is in my opinion more mature, various and sophisticated than its predecessor".

The lyrics on CD are dealt with poems about author's dreams, feelings,... Are they especially based in any topic (love, hate,...)? Do you want to transmit something to the listener or just express in the way you want?

—"There isn't any single feeling (only or only hate) but a mixture of the moods harmonising with each other".

It seems that the word "Medieval" takes an important role in Crown of Autumn (labelling your style,...) although this isn't for sure something new due to the fact that more and more bands are speaking abut Medieval ages and such. What's your personal motivation for connecting such subject with C.O.A.? Why do you think that Medieval spirit floats through people's veins in this so called "scene"?

—"Labelling our music is not so important for us if you think that I feel the word "Metal" a bit limiting! Nevertheless it's important and fair towards the guys to give an approximate description of what they're going to listen to they buy the album. Regarding the upcoming Medieval feeling in the scene I just can say that, as always, some bands are honest and many others are not".

You used a session drummer for the demo ad a new one for the CD. Do you prefer to work in this way instead of using a permanent drummer? Has he provided any personal ideas,... or simply obeyed your "rules"?

—"The session drummer of "Ruins" is not the same who plays with us now. Mattia (our new drummer who worked on the album) wants to remain as a session-musician even though I think he will play again with us in our next work".

Why have you mixed tow different vocals in the album? Are they used with the intention of creating a specific "path"?

—"The different vocals styles create different sensations in the listener. They develop from dark narrations to evocative screams, from sweet singings to warlike chants full of pathos".

What can we expect of the new compositions' Any change in your style? Are you seeking new horizons (not forgetting first steps)?

—"Of course! We are going to develop our style towards an even more sophisticated sound. A lot of material for the follower of "The treasures Arcane" is ready. Maybe we'll use a choir, strings, flutes and brass together with the good old synth".

To be honest, I'm not able to do more questions at this moment. I shall close this interview with extremely original words: Anything to add?

—"Music is incantation. Thanks for this interview".

INVESTIGATING INTO MAURO'S WOMB

Canaan is one of those cases where you need time and total dedication to appreciate such tremendous potential. Italian spiders Canaan made me feel unknown sensations so far. "Blue Fire" is like a cosmic ray invading the utter space. You can do nothing but sitting and contemplating the spectacle in all its splendour. Mauro (Canaan's interlocutor) also runs Eibon Records (a fusion of multiple vibrations) and collects a wide range of "strange" sounds. I was supposed to do some questions of "Walk into my open Womb" second album, but Mauro did not send me the CD in time, so... Anyway, I'm proud to present a short but constructive/destructive "soliloquy".

Which were your inner motivations to conceive a band like Canaan'

—"A desire and need to cleanse the spiritual venom that poisons my soul. The band trespasses the usual concept of amusement to become a preminent part in the balance of my psychic equilibrium. Playing is not fun, but rather a psychological requirement to walk upon the razor of life without cutting my feet. And be sure its blade sharper that you think".

What's the general concept of Canaan? What's the significance of the band in your mortal existence?

—"It's quite hard for me to make you understand how important the band is. Let's say I would abandon my work, passions, my readings, everything that counts in my material life in order to improve and expand the DIMENSIONS of the band. Yet this wouldn't give you the slightest idea of what Canaan means: putting it simple, I say its is (at moment at least) the most important aspect of my life".

Mauro during one of his astral projections

"Blue Fire" has the ability to submerge the listener into a sea of pompous emotiveness. How would you describe those multiple particles that conform this first album?

—Quite a hard question. Canaan's music mirrors the different aspects of our personalities, and performs this task by putting together a variety of musical elements. Our desire of experimenting new ways of composing music is currently following our personal evolution, and the final result is a good approximation of what I, Luca, Matteo and Tony are. No double meanings or false masks: listen Canaan and you'll be able to take a spot into our souls, or at least to that part we wish to disclose".

If Canaan was a pictorial manifestation exclusively... How would it look like? Would it be something closer to abstract art?

—"I don't think so. I would rather think about a subtly disquieting drawing of Da Vinci. I don't appreciate abstract art as it lacks the depth and beauty of the classical art, and it is often to masque real creative limitations".

Tell us something about the origin of the word Canaan. Has its meaning, a direct connection with a part of your personality?

—"Not really. I just took it from and old AMON DUUL II song which was called KANAAN. It has no special hidden or esoteric meaning, quite simply it has a beautiful sound".

Why did you choose music as a form of expression (instead of cinematography, photography,...)? Is it a kind of therapy?

—"As I have told you before, music is an essential element to help me preserving psychic balance. Whenever I face the barathrum, Canaan put its nails in the back of my head keeping a more or less stabile balance, much like a kind of mental exorcism. To a certain extent, I can safely say it is a therapy. Yet its importance is not limited to Canaan only: good music of any kind acts like a powerful natural drug able to relieve me from pain and boredom-I'm sure you know what I mean...".

Would you mind giving us a global analysis of the lyrical side in "Blue Fire"? Are they dealing exclusively with a definite state of your mind?

—"The lyrics I wrote for "Blue Fire" stand out as my personal confrontation with a particular dreamworld and with a certain part of the reality surrounding me. But always keep in mind that I have no message to give to the reader-I would just like to paint out some of the visions that constantly swirl in my mind. Negativity, pain, suffering, failures. Everything that has an impact upon myself can become the topic of a lyric, even though the y usually deal with a more "dreamy" kind of reality".

What does the smoke of Blue Fire smell like? Is it an ethereal part of yourself floating far away of stereotypes?

—"Incense and blood. As for the second part of the question, I really never asked myself: "Are we far enough from stereotypes"? We do what we need and like without paying attention to the formal side of things. Canaan's strength also lies in the extreme spontaneity we act with. Stereotypes are for those to plan what to sound and how to do it. Which is not the way we act".

Could Canaan be considered an intimate consequence of your personal being? What's the role of each member in the band?

—"Each of us contributes to the creation and arrangement of a new song, while I am the main responsible for the iconographic and lyrical side of things. Yet Canaan is not a manifestation of myself only, but rather a deep of inextricable mixture of 4 human beings different from each other yet bonded by the magic of music".

"Blue Fire" was released through your own record company (Eibon Records). Was Eibon Records created with the primary aim of controlling all Canaan's creations? What are the "ingredients" that a band should have in order to be incorporated into Eibon's guide?

—"Eibon was created with the aim of giving ground to Canaan, but it rapidly turned into a demanding full-time job, and 8 CDs have been published so far. I only sign bands I do like, no matter of what they play. I am extremely open minded as far as musical tastes are concerned, and I therefore don't care about producing only a certain kind of music. My bands are however joined by a massive dose of personality and a desire to create something unusual and against the current trends of music business, where massive promotion overcomes real quality".

One of the Eibon info-sheets that you sent me ends with these words: "Eibon Records support the withering of mankind". Why this "slogan"? Do you think that human condition is extremely rotten actually?

—"I despise and spit upon the human insects surrounding me. This is why I really wish a rapid and painful withering of mankind. The poor overcrowded mother earth cannot support another increase of the human garbage infesting the planet. Possible solution? Nuclear termination. Let's stop the madness of mankind".

What can people expect of other Eibon's products (While Heaven Wept, Nothing, Weltschmerz, Esoteric,...)?

—"Oh, nice question. Extremely well produced and played music. Does it make any difference if it's metal, ambient or gothic? I don't think so. The next release will be the long awaited debut CD "Sorrow of the angels" of the US doomsters While Heaven Wept. The other CDs will follow before the end of 1998, together with SEMEN LUNAE and probably a couple more. Just take a look at my site (http://www.thais.it/eibon) in order to have an updated info".

Do you mean to consolidate Eibon as your full-time job? Maybe... Are you aware of the fact that your releases won't sell enough to reach a "wealthy" economical status?

—"Eibon has been my full time job for some months right now. I'm conscious about the little sales of my products, but I don't care that much, as long as I can survive and produce new music. Quite a lot of people are constantly being attracted by the high qualitative estándar of my productions, and I think it's just a question of time before Eibon conquest of the earth. Ah, just joking of course. Yet I'm confident I can turn the label into a way to earn a decent living. Only time shall tell whether I'm right or not. In the meanwhile, I will keep on producing music I do like, without caring about the potential sales and pre-sales and bullshit like these".

What do you wish to say about the 13 tracks (plus a cover version of the band Mana Mana) that shape your second full-length "Walk into my open womb"? How would describe the logical evolution in "Walk into my open womb"?

—"Oh, the new stuff moves in the same direction of "Blue Fire", yet it is even more melancholic. The acquisition of a bass-player (Tony) also allowed us to improve the arrangements and reach a new level of mutual interaction. Under a strictly musical point of view, I'd say is a little less space of experimental cuts, as we're privileging "played" songs. I think there will only be 3 experimental songs, a bit longer that those included in our previous work however. Needless to say, we are all very anxious to start working over this new CD, as we're conscious about our potential. I only hope we'll be able to raise enough money to record and mix it properly-not having a large label at our back, the economical factor can unfortunately be relevant".

Do you have in mind flashes for the layout of this new album? Does it keep parallelisms with "Blue Fire"' Is it going to exceed all limits?

—"It will exceed all limits. I can assure you won't ever see such a CD again in your life. It's very likely that we'll press two different editions of "Walk into my open womb"-a limited ultra-luxurious one and a simpler one. I am already working over some pages of the booklet. Of course, we're also collecting some pictures and drawings we'd like to use for the CD, but more in general, the layout will be simpler than "Blue Fire". And we'll use a good portion of hand-written calligraphy, provided by Tony's excellent talent".

Feel free to end this chapter. Take a good care of yourself, Mauro.

—"I would like to thank you for this excellent interview. LOVE UNDER THE POWER OF WILL".

NICK CAVE: "I CONSIDER MYSLEF MORE A SONGWRITER THAN A MUSICIAN, THE LYRICS ARE THE MOST TIME CONSUMING"

The Australian singer and songwriter, and The Bad Seeds celebrate the 15 years of the band with "The Best of..."

Emulating the preacher played by Robert Mitchum in "The night of the Hunter", Nick Cave tattooed on his knucles the words "love" and "hate"; he did it for the videoclip "The Mercy Seat", a song that narrates, in first person, the last thoughts of a condemned to death before being taken to the electric chair.

In 1996 he composed, always with his band, The Bad Seeds, a record that was from start to finish about stories of crime. The legends of the deep South of U.E., that proliferate in the old blues, and where faith and madness mix, inspired Nick Cave titles like "The first born is dead" or "Your funeral my trial". "As a writer, I find violence very estimulating at the time of creating" analyses the musician in his London house; "I can't explain the reason, it always has been like this". Violent was the music that made him wellknown with the band The Birthday Party, the late 70s, a distortion of rock and blues which turned to one of the most painful experiences of the afterpunk. After the separation of the band, Cave founded Nick Cave and the Cavemen, that immediately turned into Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds.

Fifteen years later they celebrate their career with a "Best of...". "It's a record that defines perfectly the process we have followed, that movement that takes you from initial rebelliousness to the state of grace, a journey that in my opinion, contains the essence of creation. First of all, you defy everything that is imposed upon you, the establishment, and you oppose to it, but later you learn to live with it and accept the same things, till it becomes part of your life" A recopilation that runs through 11 albums from his post Birthday Party time, where it is evident, his approach to the musical structures and more classical melodies, not meaning by this that we're talking of a conventional composer.

"Now, what I need is to learn to accept what I've done in the past. I never listen to my records, I must confess that I was a little afraid to listen to some of the oldest songs. In a way, I wanted to do it, I think it's a good method to show people everything we've done; but on the other hand, I was afraid of the different levels that could be among the material of older times. At the end I discovered our records from a coherent image".

Mick Harvey, another survivor from Birthday Party, and Blixa Bargeld from Berlin, member of the radical and experimental band Eins-türznede Neubauten are the musical basis of a formation which have counted with the collaboration of Barry Adamson or Kid Congo Powers. "I consider myself more a songwriter than a musician, the lyrics are the most time consuming. When I enter into a studio, I let the band take care of the music. Our working method is very simple, they arrive there, record what they think they must and that's it. Bad Seeds surprise me continuously"

An artistic relationship which started with "From here to Eternity" (1985), a record where the intoxicating steem of Birthday Party was still noticeable and that was prolonged with titles like "Kicking against the pricks" (1986)- a versions album that contains from Neil Diamond to Jimmy Hendrix, not forgetting John Lee Hooker-,"The good Son" (1990)- where Nick Cave and his musicians worked hard on songs full of deep and secret emotions till we get to the recent "The Boatman's Call" (1997)," a record of devote ballads of love", as it was defined by Nick Cave. "I suppose that in some way we have closed a period. We've changed, we 're very different from the group that was formed 15 years ago, but our work is still the same, the intention is clear. In the future we'll have to look for new ways, which is highly exciting".

Nick Cave's works are marked by different elements, besides violence. Violence comes from his obsession for god and the bible. In his lyrics live angels, damned sinners, being afraid of the divine justice, mortals that have their grace and others that have reached it by means of love. "Somebody wrote a great stupidity about me, that the more depressed I am the more inspired. Bullshit. My work demands from me not to be in a certain mood, but to be opened to new sensations, that's why I write. That's why it's essential to be ready when the inspiration arrives, be prepared to welcome it, because it's something that comes from God" Another peculiarity, although more hidden, are the towns, in Melbourne Birthday Party emerged, in Berlin The Bad Seeds. London and L.A. have been two vital sceneries for Cave and Sao Paulo is the city where he lived with the mother of his son Luke. "Different places, different ways of life. Obviously, they left their mark on my songs. The climate, the rhythm of life, the existence in every one of them changed me. I've never felt tired to any place. I can't stay too long in a place. London is my actual home, but just for the moment".

The convulsed beauty

The artistic situation of Nick Cave-composer, musician, novelist, scriptwriter, occasional actor- is as indisputable as his aversion for journalists. "The interviews are boring. I hate them. I'm not at all interested in the idea of talking about me. I prefer to seat and work in anything, better than start chatting away. I hate talking about what I do, it takes all the mystery away, all the beauty". Perhaps because his profession obliges him, Cave has become a hard worker, driving his energy always towards the investigation of the dark side of his heart. His novel "And the ass saw the angel" was stated by the same critics that he insulted: the accusation of copying with precision, writers like Faulkner or Pearl S. Buck, ignoring that the book was a superb example of literary construction, which for the moment, has not future continuity.

Together with the singer and performer Lydia Lunch, he created "50 short plays for the theatre" which never got presented. With directors Evan English and John Hillcoat he signed a script for a film about convicts "Ghost of the civil dead". Also for Hillcoat, he composed, together with Harvey and Bargeld, the soundtrack of "To have and to hold", where Scott Walker sang a Bob Dylan's song. Wim Wenders was fascinated by Cave and The Bad Seeds and he used a piece of one of his concerts in "Heaven over Berlin"; later he asked to do the soundtrack for "Faraway, so close" and "Until the end of the world". His only appearance on the screen was in a small role in Tom Dicillo's "Johnny Suede". He has also participated in the records of homage to Leonard Cohen and Kurt Weill.

Solstice is the perfect example of a band with defined personality. They perfectly know what to do in music. They've showed to have the courage of their convictions during all these years, totally isolated from current trends. Solstice oozes oomph, charisma, maturity,... They epitomise Metal in golden letters.Clean vocals, forceful guitars, magnificent drumming,... Should I need to add more? After unpleasant affairs with some labels, they were lucky enough to find Russell Smith (older than...) of Black Tears who released "Halcyon" 10" EP in a limited edition of 500 copies with embossed cover (I really don't know if he's got any copy left so better ask him). But the most important thing was that Russell worked intensively in order to spread Solstice's name properly, and thanks to this (I guess...) Misanthropy Records offered them a deal (a bit surprising in the beginning but now...). Regarding "New Dark Age" second album and upcoming releases, Rich said: "... Looking back on the songs we've written, I'm pretty satisfied but if the truth be known, I'm more looking forward now to the next album as it will be the next step in our musical evolution... In between we're gonna record a mini CD/12"EP for the Bad Acid label entitled "Domeculte" if all goes well". Meanwhile, I'll cross my fingers for an extensive European Tour of Solstice and hopefully visiting us, but Rich made me burst into tears last week with such words: "Of course, Spain would be an experience indeed but for myself I would dislike the weather (I hate hot weather totally). Thankfully Albion is a very cold and rainy country". Rich, You're always welcome to hell!

Heavier than wind

Solstice was formed in 1990 by you... Which are your remembrances of that period? And the whole Metal "scene"?

—1990? A strange period to be sure. My fadest memories at that time would have to revolve around Saint Vitus' magnificent "V" opus. A truely classic slab of Doom Metal. And of course the incredible show they played in Bradford that year on their UK tour with Cathedral. These events although trivial to some are very significant to myself, the Saint Vitus show was almost a religious experience. Although the turn out for it was very low the atmosphere was charged with anticipation that Titans walked amongst us- and we were not disappointed!! Other than that I remember struggling to piece together a solid line up for the band and the other guitarist leaving after the first few rehearsal. But then feel that most bands suffer problems in their embryonic stages".

It would be interesting if you could tell us a little about your region (Albion). Would you recommend a visit?

—"It is cold, bleak and what liltle of the countryside that is left untouched by industrialism is quite beautiful. It saddens me to see our lands despoiled such. The moors near us (Saddleworth) are quite simply breathtaking and have to be seen to believe. In all of Albion there is no place greater than Yorkshire and I state that with true conviction. Of course, I would recommend a visit, but not to "tourists". The woods are sampled at night around a fire exchanging tales of the macabre or consuming heroic amounts of ale- Aye! Tourists are by nature despoilers with their "Coca-Cola commercialism", leaving litter, destroying plant life, and showing nothing but ignorance. They are best suited to London and eating at McDonnals. We do not want them here nor are they welcome. Of course we have more than our fair share of castles, stone circles, etc, and of course I would recommend the Royal Armouries museum in Leeds (A history of weapons and warfare) and the Jorvik Viking museum in York (expensive but grand-Aye!)".

The line-up changed along the existence of Solstice. Is it difficult to find proper musicians in your area? Do you demand more than "just a musician"?

—"Of course, there are huge amounts of egotists, poseurs and slackers. And we demand more than just a musician. Characteristics such as loyalty, honesty, determination and courage are required. Some ex –members although having these qualities had no option but to leave for personal strife. Now that I can respect. The rest, well let's just say that I hope they fucking rot... especially Mr. Stavely Longshanks. He was the most boring person I ever met. I sincerely hope that scouse bastards Anathema get as sick of him as we did".

Two demos and an EP were released ("Lamentations" + "MCMXCII", "As Empires fell") before your debut CD. How did everything turn out? Did they help to promote the name of the band properly?

—"In my opinion, they were great releases for their time recorded on very limited budgets in a short space of time and are regarded as classic of the genre in some quarters. I am not sure how to gauge in what effect they had on our popularity and to a certain extent it would be presumptuous of me to do so. However, I'm sure that they helped to a certain degree, but that was 6 years ago and we are much more mature musically than we were then".

The words "For Ale, For Albion, For Metal" appear on the cover of your last rehearsal tape... What does the term Metal mean in your life'

—"Everything. I live for metal. No other music comes close in terms of musicianship, expression and sheer excitement. From Black Sabbath to Bathory, from Candlemass to Celtic Frost, from the glory of True Metal!!!! Hail!!!".

How did the chance arise to get a contract with Candlelight Records? What about sales...? Do you consider that it was beneficial for you to be in a label of your own country?

—"It was very simple, really. We gave Lee Barret a demo and he liked it enough to offer us a deal. As far as beneficial- well as everyone in the UK scene knows Candlelight is a joke as far as been a respected label. Lee is merely a puppet manipulated by the cunt who runs Plastic Head (Fuck You Steve Beatty!). Also- I feel now that he's pretty unprofessional and most of all, he's turned out to be exceptionally fickle as for as sorting out advertising, contracts, and the payment of delds. Still, he's not alone in his total incompetence. Karl Dematra who ran Godhead is possibly the lowest form of life to walk this planet. And if I ever get hold of him I shall chop his fuck-

ing head off. At the end of the day, the only label so far that it has been beneficial for us to be associated with has been Black Tears. Without Russ we would be pretty much felt in the lurch. He has at his own expense put a lot of time and effort into Solstice. Apart from that, he's also one of the few people on this planet who passionately cares about the underground instead of lining their own pockets. Hail to Russ!".

What are the most remarkable points in "Lamentations" full-length CD' Have they showed the real potential of Solstice?

—"Personally, I like the strength of songwriting and execution of the songs themselves. Compared with a lot of other bands debuts its in a league of its own, but than we have always endeavoured to release quality rather than just throw a collection of riffs together in the vain hope that it will sound good. I would say that it showed potential but only as a taster of what we are yet to become. There are parts from "Lamentations" that are essential in the process of our songwriting which we have retained and will advance upon with "New Dark Age".

The band toured (just after the releasing of "Lamentations" CD) in the UK, with Count Raven and in mainland Europe with Anathema. Disclose us some of your experiences with both wellknown bands.

—"Both were excellent. Count Raven was a real boost to us as it got the band into the "swing" of playing shows every night and brought us close together as a live unit. Unfortunately the show attendance were pretty dreadful for the most part but to meet and then tour with Count Raven was a fantastic experience for myself as I am a big fan of their music. The Anathema was pretty much the same thing except better attended (once more showing to us the apathy of English audiences) plus I got to meet a lot of friends and brothers who I had been in touch with over the years. The high point for me was meeting up with Count Raven in Stockholm and renewing aquainlences, plus the show we played in Frankfurt- Aye, that was intense, indeed. Right now we are looking forward to the chance of touring again as although this line up has already played a few shows, I wish to see it we are "Roadworthy"!!!".

There are plans for a full tour in Russia and the "Gates of Doom" festival in the US. Have these events finally come through?

—"The Gates of Doom became just a lot of bullshit and speculation so nothing ever happened. Still, it had become financially unfeasible for the promoter due to his biggest sponsor pulling out which was most unfortunate for all concerned. The show would have gone down in History as the heaviest ever. As far as Russia goes, we were offered seven shows but nothing has been finalised. I am determined to see it happen though at any cost. It has been a dream of mine to visit Russia for many years. Having said that there are many other places I would love to play shows as well such as Australia, Japan, Norway, South Africa, etc".

Any special reason to release "Halcyon" MiniCD 1994 as 10"EP now? Are these tracks still representative of the actual style?

—"Of course, for a start "Halcyon" was recorded halfway through 1995, not 1994. Also it is a document of our progression not to mention a piece of history for us. Godhead released the mini-CD one and a half years late at the end of 1997, a couple of months later Black Tears released the 10" vinyl version. Yes, it represents us, obviously we have a different singer now, etc but we sound pretty much the same and have the same concepts we just execute than with more conviction than we ever did".

Some titles of "New Dark Age" second full-length album are: "Sleeping Tyrant, "Hammer of Damnation", "Blackthrone",... These tracks are much heavier and more aggressive than previous stuff, but... Would you mind writing your personal description of the way you compose?

—"As I said before, we were pretty much the same. What changed was that we made a conscious effort to put more aggression into our music. If you put more aggression into our music. If you like we want to modernise Doom Metal. For too long it has been associated with flares, crosses and awful 70's retro bands- I hate the majority of them as they just jumped on the "bandwagon" anyway and have nothing of lasting value or intelligence to offer. But, do not consider my viewpoint as some vain attempt to install a doom metal hierarchy (as what happened with Black Metal), it's just that we feel that Doom Metal should be just that. Back to our music, well I would describe it as titanic martial anthems or Dark brooding laments".

What do the lyrics deal with? Are music and lyrics in the same level of importance

—"The lyrics? Well let me start by saying that they are all serious and in no way should be considered works of fiction. I am proud to say that, although inspiration actually does come from works of such grand master of literature as Tolkien, Lovecraft, Howard, etc- the "message"(for want of a better description) is there for the listener to find. I would not really see it as my place to tell any person what it is, I myself know and that to me suffices. Different people interpretate them in different ways and find inspiration themselves which is very rewarding for me, obviously some are more blatant than others. I think that the title of "New Dark Age" itself gives a lot away in that the whole album lyrically deals with the more tervours aspects of mankind current and continued existence".

Female vocalist (multi-effects) is looking for a male sampler / extended vocalist (multi-effects, non smoker) or band who creates experimental, demonic and mystic industrial music.

Influenced by in slaughter natives, voice-use of Diamanda Galás, Von Magnet (flamenco-bohemien-feel), la Fura dels Baus (surrealistic theatre, horrorfilm samples).

Flamenco / horror-singer-or band please write:

P. Koring

IE. C. Huygensstraat

108 Bel

1054B2 Amsterdam

The Netherlands.

WHEN POETRY MEETS MUSIC

PARAGON OF BEAUTY is the perfect example of a promising "band" though it would be erroneous to call them a band in the exact meaning of the word. It goes beyond this conception. They're evolving smashing insights when it comes to develop a solid concept. Prophecy impulsed "The Spring" into the market. Urmmm, a convincing piece... but simply in a small dose. It doesn't show the true potential of the band. The touching lyrics are simply fantastic, they have a very versatile singer, there are some cool guitar-melodies here and there,... Anyway, there's something not totally convincing. Erhhh, I'm not capable of writing about it!!!! A second album is what I want. It'll dispel a couple of doubts.

Your band's name has a very personal significance... Each one can interpret it in his/her own way. What's your model of beauty'..And the rest of the group? Is the essence of beauty utterly reflected on the band's concept?

—"Beauty has always to do with poetry because true poetry is always beautiful so to say the essence of beauty because it reveals pure truth. Even death and tragedies are in a poetic manner beautiful. So our name allows us to play omniscient music. Paragon of Beauty not only plays music, we try to give poetry a musical robe. Poetry reflects in secret words the interior of man. All feeling, experiences and knowledge can be captured in poetry and music and that's what we try to do".

Would you able to sum up Paragon of Beauty's philosophy? Is it distant form pragmatism?

—"The philosophy behind Paragon of Beauty is a huge system. The lyrics of "The Spring" and the material in our book are only some splinters. It is absolute impossible to explain the philosophy in an interview. But I can tell you that it is distant from pragmatism. There are no rules how to act in special situation or things like that. Paragon of Beauty is a quest for true poetry, for real tragedies. We try to look behind the obvious and reveal spiritual truth".

The first time I read something of Paragon of Beauty was a review in Soluzen Magazine... What's your description of the two demos? Are they still representative of your actual style?

—"In May 1996 we recorded our first 8 tracks demo called "Starwoven" with songs composed between 1994 and 1995. I still like some of the "Starwoven-tracks" but sound and the simple structured songs of this demo don't represent Paragon of Beauty 1998 anymore. In autumn 1996 we released a second tape called "Snowfall summerdream". Three tracks of this tape appear (partly totally rearranged) also on "The Spring".

How do you see the evolution in the band? In which degree of maturity would you place Paragon of Beauty?

—"I think that our development if far from being finished. With the release of "The Spring" we just made the first step. We have a lot of ideas for the future. Concerning maturity I must tell you, we did always know what we wanted to do. We work for a new artistic conscience. Our aim is clear, our musical skills can be improved".

Do you have any specific goals in the band? What kind of status would you like to reach?

—"We like to express through music, so we work not for the audience. But everyone who like our music should be able to get our CDs and see us o tour together with highbrow bands. So I think we can be quite happy with our status".

Do you consider your music would fit for a soundtrack? Which would be the perfect movie?

—"Maybe. Do you know the movie "The golden embrace" from I Albinsson? Christofer Johnsson composed the music for this Swedish art movie. Something I could imagine together with our music".

According to the biography: "The quintet experience a lot of influences, nevertheless they have their own style...". If someone call you the German version of Katatonia... Would you refute them? What makes you different?

—"If somebody would compare us with Katatonia I would be pleased because I love this band from their first release and I deeply respect their work. But I think concerning our stylistic means and ways there is a great difference to Katatonia. Apart from this they do somehow the same as we do, they capture tragedies in music. But in their own and perfect way".

Would you deem yourselves as an original band? What's the importance of originality in P.OB.?

—"I think we are original because we never tried to sound like somebody else. We started our musical career together, improved our instrumental skills and knowledge about arrangements. And we did never cover some songs from other bands. So our totally unique style was formed. We play music in the way we find it deep in our souls. Maybe this is the fountain of originality".

"Where the spherical tunes of cosmos descend to join with the tender and raging melodies of nature and are forged to an earthly dress, there begins the music of Paragon of Beauty..." (taken from a Prophecy press-sheet). What's the percentage of cosmical particles that P.OB. contain? Is there a total equilibrium of both unearthly and earthly aspects?

—"Yes and No. Emotions, feelings, knowledge, wisdom, truth, inner pictures are nothing earthly. But these things can be mirrored through music, can be dressed in an earthly robe. This is the only way to tell them to someone else. Capturing poetry, catching spiritual truth and making them audible and even somehow visible, for the soul not for the eyes, that is what we do".

The front cover of "The Spring" shows a shilouette diving into a lake or something like that. Can you give us a wider interpretation of this photo?

—"The shilouette is not diving into the lake, it is "jumping" out of it. The front cover is the visual support for the concept of "The Spring". Spring means more than a season, it means also fountain or well. So it is the birth of the seed for a new age and artistic conscience, the birth of the first tragedy. The cover shows the lake, that is somehow the centre of our world. At this lake every started. In this lake the flaming knights were born and there we find our names: Monesol, Taisha, Sol".

The first limited edition of "The Spring" includes a book entitled "Die Mondsonnengwiege" (written by Nocturno M. Monesol and Lord Sol). What can you reveal of it? What's the main subject?

—"Die Mondsonnenwiege" is the flaming document of our spiritual birth. You can't find a whole story in the books. It contains only fragments, short stories, poems. Unfortunately it is written in German, no English translation is available. But I'm not able to tell you something more. Everybody who is interested has to read the book, because its content is too deep and mystic for some words in an interview".

The passionate lyrics is one of the strongest points in "The Spring"... Does Monesol pretend to arouse some sleeping feelings? Is it more like a therapy for the soul?

—"Monesol lyrics are far away solar-systems, little sparks in a huge universe. The single words are small extracts viewed through the telescope of the soul, for a better understanding of our whole philosophy. As I told you, on the Spring everything works together, the book, the lyrics, the music, the cover and even all pictures in the booklet".

Why "The Spring"? What does this season transmit you? Do you also use to be more energetic?

—"The Spring is the season of birth and this is our album: the birth of the flaming knights and the goldfairy-ladies. And Spring means more than a season, it means also fountain, as I told above".

You're ready for tours,... What can P.OB. provide to the audience on stage? Does your show lack of the static basis so common in most of the bands in the so called scene?

—"On stage, we try to give our best. We didn't have much gigs up to know, so we are really crazy about touring and making new experiences. We try to present our music in a true way, without an image or things like that. So we act natural on stage".

Look forward this short questionnaire will be according to the circumstances. The last space is entirely for you, use it!!!

I thank you and every reader for the interest in Paragon of Beauty. Hope to see you soon on tour!".

...AND THE SAGA CONTINUES

As everybody knows, zines are essential channels. Some of them are very informative or whatever... Nonetheless, after a quick reading you realise they haven't given you a point of reflection. They haven't made you think twice about something. It's the same like reading your mother's magazines at the toilet. Fortunately, there are zines cultivating the language in an astonishing way. They've the ability to offer unusual perspectives of making a zine. I'm speaking about Isten. "About Isten's (journalistic attitude) through the years, I can't speak for the others, but personally I want people to react, I want them to disagree vehemently or nod in agreement. I want to inspire them, confuse them, make them want to kill or create. I don't any support from people who think they can rely on my support regardless of what they're doing. I don't want love and respect by saying things that people want to hear, I want to say things that need to be said". I've taken the liberty to quote some Mikko Mattila's words (a part of Istenian family). If you're looking for independent journalism, then You've Isten. If you want the best use of English ever read before, then you've Isten. If you need literature, then you've Isten. No matter if you like or not the bands featured. It's their stylish way of writing what makes Isten different.

Ahhh, The Unholy Trinity (Mattila, Sarna, Krauze) have newly recruited a member their privileged lot: Kristian Piilïla (Isengrim)... Not strange at all since he writes very Istenian texts. Read his Isengrim #2. My queries were rather chaotic and uncompleted, but there's no sense to apologise at this moment. As someone said, I haven't done my homeworks. Well, I'll let Mikko crucify the whore.

Horns up, Meggido! Are you ready to be bothered by my questions? Perhaps... Would you prefer to do Satanic Rituals to honor Satan (like devilish Infernus of Gorgoroth: he killed some animals in the name of Satan though his Lord didn't speak to him... Upsss) instead of this damned...?

—"Bloody hellfire with little devils, Raúl... I think this whole thing about me performing satanic ceremonies has been blown out of proportion. But what the heck, things happen, people die. This interview seems nice, no problem, other than the fact that I more or less feel that each one of our issues is a complete, glorious statement all on its own- and therefore it is a little awkward for me to further analyse them, or answer questions that are best left unanswered, but let us see..."

> "Isten is "cult". We´re not fond of being indebted to any organisation... People are spoiled 'cause everythig is pushed in their faces and I feel they should put some more effort into finding out what´s worth worship and what´s not. All good thing for those who search, examine and learn. It doesn´t matter to me personally if it´s 50000, 5000, or 50 people reading Isten as long as there are true Istenites among them, i.e. individuals who like it for the right reasons"

To Hell and Back into Istendom dominion... The editorial staff refused to be categorised as "Isten Magazine". Why do you think that people tend to use the word "Magazine" all the time? And what about your preference for "Zine" instead of "Mag"?

—"Why can't Isten be Isten, plain and simple? What's the problem? If that's too confusing for some people, then go buy our demo! According to Finnish legislation at least, a magazine is something that is supposed to come out four times a year, which is not obviously the case with Isten. It's not a periodical, it's an occasional. The word zine, then again, refers to fanzine, and we're not fans, so that's not appropriate either. Both words have an unpleasant ring to them when applied to Isten. Excuse me for a see, I'll pop in Emperor Band's "Anthems to the Welkin at Dusk Record" (released by Candlelight Label) now".

A decade has passed since the very beginning of Isten.. What would be the balance so far? Has it provided something to your life?

—"It's been over a decade by now, in fact, 'cause Isten actually began all the way back in 1984. There were five "demo issues" before the official #1, but they were Isten alright. That aside, there's a slight distortion of perspective in that question of yours.. Let's get this straight: Isten is considerably bigger than I am. It's a giant that has a mind of its own, it is the Non-Church of The Late Stages of the Mystery. I, personally, have no plans, no dreams, no religion, so while I drift with no aim or purpose, it's strangely comforting to see Isten standing monolithically. In essence, it is my god. I hope this answers your question (which I think is a little like "What would your life have been like had you never been born?) to some extent?

Seeing as Isten is one of the oldest pieces of paper in the once called underground... What's the clue for such kind of longevity? A certain discipline?

—"No discipline, no professionalism. Fearful words, man, fearful words. By the way, How come so many people claiming to be "professional" insist on misspelling the word? Not very convincing boys and girls. Anyway, gods die hard. And a drowning man will clutch at straw. The distinct feeling that we're doing something right is pretty important as well. I firmly believe that we're doing something that wouldn't be done by anyone else. There's also this gleeful steak of dark unlikelihood to this publication that I can't quite explain. Isten defies its own existence and at the same time deifies the mystery that makes it tick. We've been doing our very best to make it possible for us to go on, refusing to go by the book and do what's expected from us. Our brand of independent and irresponsible iconoclasm should've brought about our ruin a long time, but we are still there, at our wicked sinister best".A estándar ziny question: who came with the insight of Isten and why?

—"Erm' A very 'ziny' question indeed as it's totally incomprehensible. Sorree...".

Which kind of recollections flow in your mind if I ask you about issue #1? Did you expect that the new born baby would become a respected old person?

—"Perhaps not, but I don't really even expect to wake up tomorrow, if you know what I mean. That's the way it goes- for me, at any rate. You suddenly realise that things have gone the way they have, and some of it makes sense while most of it doesn't. Our tree has grown just like any other tree in proper soil. #1 had Quorthon on the cover and stuff on Kreator, Coroner, Exodus, Mercyful Fate, etc, inside. It's all felt right, even our mistakes have been glorious, ha ha. I suppose otherwise we wouldn't be here today".

I've read in "Playing with Fire" that issue#2 was in the same way of its previous edition. Anyway, it contained a crossword which looks at least entertaining... What can you tell me of it (I'm hardly able to read it due to the fact of extremely small printing and the Finnish language)?

—"Ah, old shit. No arcane secrets of the deeper kind, it had to do with "speed kills" somehow. Bands and persons that were involved included Kreator, Harris Johns, The Great Kat, Whiplash, Blessed Death, Overkill and so on. If I go any further back in history and nostalgia this'll start to sound like Snakepit Magazine...".

> "Anyway, dogs die hard. And a drowning man will clutch at a straw. The distinct feeling that we´re doing something right is pretty important as well. I firmly believe that we´re doing something that wouldn´t be done by anyone else"

#3 was your first ever written in English, containing bands like Mekong Delta, Vendetta, etc and Finnish Speed Metal... Did I miss any worthy bands from the land of thousand lakes? Any of them survived to the inexorable...?

—"The third issue was still in Finnish actually, apart from one article that was in English. And no, you didn't miss out on anything much, don't worry. However, I think it's strange and also a little irreverent of you to delve these rather uninteresting and unimportant old issues (to all of you non-Finnish speakers especially) from our formative years without even touching issues #4, #5, #6 and #7 that essentially made Isten what it is".It's readable on one of "Mädchen" flyers: Isten has never been about supporting the underground, it's been about challenging it". Is this fight in the type of thought provoking instead of simply informing of last news, bla, bla, bla,...?

—"It means what it sez, I really don't have anything to add. *It has a lot to do with what* I was saying about us having done our darnedest to make it a living hell for *ourselves* to go on... In many ways, we're kind of anti-. It's all relatively simple to me, though. As long as the underground can provide the necessary conditions for a publication like Isten to exist, it deserves Isten, it's worthy of it".

What's your stance of actual situation in the music market? Are we going too far with those countless bands, labels,... popping out here and there? Otherwise... Are they harvesting the fruits?

—"Gadzooks. Now that's what I'd call a question. The only proper way to answer, I think, would be a 10 page essay with a multitude of run-on sentences, finally settling with concluding words of the calibre of "maybe yes no". The current situation in the music market is a complexity of extremes, which in a way is pretty funny since so much of the music is belligerently mediocre. Too far? It's like, in some ways, definitely- but then, some great music is still being released... and whatever I say here is destined to sound like a horrible platitude".

I'm not trying to enter into nostalgic paths at this point. I merely would like to know about the values that you regarded highly of the aforementioned underground (novice relationship with Metal). Don't you think that honesty, innocence,.. were more present at that time?

—"True music lovers still exist. People still put out great records and publications. With some people you see immediately that they won't be around for much more than a couple of months, or maybe a year or so. Just because there's a hell of a lot of garbage being done and released doesn't make the good stuff any less significant. Quite opposite really. In some ways it was worse back in the old days- you more or less knew everybody, and when somebody turned out to be a rip off or grew out of metal, or whatever really, you tended to take it personally and felt like shit for, like, minutes. Now I have plenty of other reasons to feel like shit about, so that cancels out rather nicely. And no, honesty has never been all the prevalent anywhere anytime, so I haven't spotted any drastic changes concerning that aspect. For the most part, nostalgia blows, but in itself is a manifestation of innocence, or naïveté, rather".

Imagine an hypotetic competition. Number from 1 to 5 the most essential albums in your personal collection and write in a couple of lines saying why you have chosen them.

—"Five seems factitious to me. Five's not right at all. However number one would be Celtic Frost "Into the Pandemonium" for being the unparalleled mesiterwerk that it is, totally and collosally brilliant. I reviewed it in Isten#1 and at times-issues#7, for example- Isten has been all about Celtic Frost in general and "Into the Pandemonium" in particular. "To Mega Therion" is just about as fundamental. There's a hoarde of other records that mean a great deal to me, and it would serve no purpose to pick out just three or four of them and say, "this is number three and this is number four". Some stuff I've grown up with, some stuff works wonders when I'm depressed and so on and so forth. That's the beauty of great music- it works. Its purpose is not to look good on a list of some kind, it's meant to fill us (only temporarily but still) with meaning, essence, significance, life,... God bloody god. But if it's names that you want me to drop: Voivod's "Killing Technology" and Bathory's "Under the Sign of Black Mark) never fail. Vintage Maiden (first four or five LPs) still rules. The first four or six Sabbath albums are absolutely tremendous. And outside metal, things like Mazzy Star's "So Tonight that I might See" and Portishead albums... This is only going to get out of hand if we proceed, so let us not".

After several diabolic dribbling to #4, #5, #6, #7,... I'm in front of number 7B "Playing with Fire", for sure the most controversial issue of Isten, Do you consider that people got the true aim of "Playing with Fire"? Was "Playing with Fire" perceived (generally speaking) as a joke? Did you receive negative reactions from penguins?

—"Wish I knew the True Aim of Playing with... myself. Isten is never quite that simple- it's always both extremely serious and extremely tongue-in-check. "Playing with Fire" was grim entertainment, it was a joke, but it was also very serious, but without any one specific message. For the most part I don't really care if it was misinterpreted by all and sundry as longs as there's even the slighest possibility that someone, somewhere has found a splinter of god somewhere on its hallowed pages. I like people who think they've found the answer. Let's face it, I am (were?) envious of black metallers. They have (had?) it all worked out in black and white. The meaning of life, the works. They think they are the revolution and for them, that's enough. It might be called naïveté in some circles, but whatever it takes to stoke their creative fires... For some reason I don't think the most revolutionary thinkers in the world make music anyway. Or fanzines, for that matter".."Cold Lake" differs drastically from the rest. How did the idea arise for this special issue?

—"Oh, and the other issues are all alike? I hope and believe that you didn't mean to imply that. I'm rather hesitant to talk about "Cold Lake" because the only comments we've got concerning that one have been questions along the lines of "What have people said about this? It was meant a very low profile affair all along. Words like toothpicks under your nails. Ice melting in the dark. Scrawls upon the mirror of the soul. I'm always puzzled when people go for this "how did you get the idea..." line of questioning, because based on what little experience I have on this, I don't think ideas dwell in any particular place. If they did, I'd move there in an instant. I don't have a clue on how "Cold Lake" happened. It just did, and boy am I glad".

Let us know about the formula for the success of "The return of the Dark Lord". Did Blackish speech make its own effect?

—"Blackie who? Lawless? I don't really know anything about success, but (The Return of the) Dark Lord came about like all other the issues of Isten... without systematic planning or anything, I dropped some hints of Playing with Fire and (The Return of the) Dark Lord as far back as in the editorial of issue #6, but we didn't really understand it until these two issues were completed. To a certain extent, Dark Lord was an "Isten goes commercial with style" type of affair- and I'm only half-joking when I say this. Janne's input had a hell of a lot to do with it. If you ask me, and correct me if I'm wrong but I think that's just what you're doing, Mr. Melancholic Ripper and Destructive Manager a.k.a. Monsieur Sarna has been every bit as much of an editor-in-chief as I am since Playing with Fire. Obviously I can't say for sure that there would be no Isten today without him, but... I will just the same. Ten thousand hail-

storms to damhair and Kola as well-true brothers in satanous evilhood!".

Isten can't be found in too many shops or distributors. Why do you refuse to work intensively in order to attract attention of more potential readers? Isten doesn't definitely carry on the politics of Ablaze Mag..."

—"There's a myriad of suitable excuses and explanations, take your pick: I'm lazy. Isten is "cult". We're not fond of being indebted to any organisation. We're even less fond of getting ripped off. People are spoiled 'cause everything is pushed right in their faces and I feel they should put more effort into finding out what's worth worship and what's not. All good things for those who search, examine and learn. It doesn't matter to me personally if it's 50.000, 5.000, 500 people reading Isten as long as there are true Istenites among them, i.e. individuals who like it for the right reason. They have to truly want it, and not just buy it together with a Dimmu Borgir CD or whatever 'cause the local metal says it's good".

I'm remembering (regarding "Mädchen") two opposed editorial lines; the one defending musical creativity and the other for "Heavy Metal is the law". What's your point of view on this subject?

—"I'm sorry but I don't see any contradiction there. There's nothing worse than people with one-track minds forcing themselves to make humongously complicated music. Similarly pathetic are people with no daemons within playing heavy metal. There's no irreconcilable conflict between the tormented seas of creativity and the power of unadulterated, true metal".

Referring "Mädchen" again,... The collage on 2nd and 39th pages hark me back to those good times... Any special reason for these cool artistic manifestations? Umm,... I can't resist to mention that one of those photos are very familiar; Spanish Death Metal band (RIP) Sacrophobia (Un saludo para mi tito Juancar), Am I mistaken?

-"No, I don't think you are. There's a number of special reasons for the collage, but in the end I think it all boils down to "Cause it's Metal". It's also a perfect match with the rest of "Mädchen", in some twisted way".

Twin Sister is the second part of the Headwind trilogy. What'd be the main concept of this latest presentation (to be published in three chapters)?

—"Beats me. Any suggestions? One of my favourite aphorists, Samuli Paronen, has once written, "Hell: they were all women in that picture, except for the devils." With Isten is always best to read it for yourself and find out whether it's an erotic thriller or a mere mockery of the concept known as "concept". It would be against everything that we stand for to try and declare what Isten is all about in a couple of lines here. Let's try and do it in seven words instead: "The meaning of life and further questions".

You've created another different piece of paper from its predecessors ("Mädchen"). This time is not so linear (ruffled?) but more journalistic layout, indeed. In your words, What are the selling points of the innocent girl?

—"It's black and white. Anyway, "journalistic layout" sounds strange. What next, journalistic architecture? Or journalistic horse polo?".

"Isten is considerabily bigger than I am. It is a giant that has a mind of his own, it is the Non-Church of The Late Stages of the Mystery... In essence, it is my god"

"Isten defies its own existence and at the same time deifies the mystery that makes it tick"

"As long as the underground can provide the necessary conditions for a publication like Isten to exist, it deserves Isten, it´s worthy of it"

"For the most part, nostalgia blows, but it in itself is a manifestation of innocence, or naivete, rather".

The Great Kat had the privilege to appear on the front cover of "Twin Sister". She portrays Istenian spirit: indecency, incitement, harshness,... How would you define Istenian "attitude" (journalistically speaking) through the years?

—"Frankly, I wouldn't. Says that The Great Kat portrays Istenian spirit is about as apt as saying that John McEnroe is the perfect manifestation of Italian literature. But thanks anyhow. Isten doesn't have a whole to do with journalism, to be honest. It's about murder. Or suicide".

Twin Sister announces that "our next volume is a special jubileum issue entitled Isten 100". Are you able to give us some hints of this deserved commemoration?

—"Not really, no. It already exists, in a way, it's just that it's in a form that cannot be expressed verbally quite yet. But I can assure you that it'll be the heaviest thing we've ever done".

The reactions (regarding your editorial career) are undoubtedly of no indifference. Those words of Kreator on their "Extreme Aggression" album ("Love us or Hate us") sum up exactly your aim... Agree? Is it something inherent to your personality/life-style?

—"Yeah, when it's not busy trying to be The Great Kat, Isten is exactly like Kreator. It's very reassuring to find out that a German thrash band managed to sum up the crux of my existence already in '89. In addition to that, it was a record that let me down in a big way back then. In real life, I'm more like a very low-key Bill Cosby Show- I crave for everybody's acceptance and understanding, but prefer to stay strictly out of the limelight (only succeeding the latter)".

Let's end this trendy interview with a trendy question nowadays... What's your stance on the retro movement (Infernö, Gehennah, Guillotine,...)? Don't you think that these bands are consequence of an evident stagnated creativity? Does it get on your nerves or a big smile?

—"Neither. I just keep monitoring the phenomenon with benevolent disinterest. In the extremely few cases when I've found something to be of some interest to me, musically, it turns out that I've been reading much more into things than I should have. Flirting with nostalgia can be both fun and valid as a statement for a track or two, but if you try to make a career out of it, it's both sad and very, very boring".

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SOPHISTICATION AT ITS HIGHEST

Do you think that Death Metal is dead? The French Sup proves you're terribly wrong. Sup has served of recycling... A Blaze In The Death Metal Sky (Are you going to kill me for abusing of this odd sentence?). A band of awesome talent, let me add. Their previous releases ("Sultry Obsession", "9092", "The Cube", "Still in the sphere", "Anomaly", "Transfer") showed a tremendous potential, but "Room 7" reaches spheres of elegance never heard before. They've accomplished a flawless album. "Room 7" is what I'd call a sonic pleasure. In fact, it's exhilarating to listen four musicians (Ludovic Loez: Guitars/Vocals; Fabrice Loez: Guitars/Vocals; Laurent Bessault: Bass; Thierry Berger: Drums) elaborating in such level of creativity. Don't think twice, Sup is your band!!!

Sons of elegance

Sup (Ex –Supuration) has reached its eight year of existence. What's your personal analysis of the evolution that the bands has "suffered" during this period?

—"The band hasn't "suffered". I think we had a good evolution. We had a lot of things to do during this period. We made some tours, new CDs,...".

... And how do you see the evolution of the whole Death Metal "scene"?

—"The Death Metal scene is OK, there are still good bands, some bands are changing their style, of course, but some bands are still really brutal. That's cool: Morbid Angel, Cannibal Corpse, etc... it's OK. We need bands like that. Of course, we've have to be open minded and listen to other kind of metal music, but the real Death Metal scene is still alive, That's for sure".

One cannot deny the fact that the visual presentation of Sup "Room Seven" Digipack provokes the audience to pronounce words of admiration. I'd like to know the different meanings of all these 3 dimensional pics. Are they products of your subsconcious?

—"It's the product of our bass player Laurent Bessault. He read the lyrics of "Room 7" and then he worked on his computer to translate what he read, on a picture of the CD, you can see doors, corridors, a pulled room,... it's a paradoxical view of Laurent Bessault, to translate the suffering of the "hero" of the story".

What are we supposed to find in room 7? Has it something to do with your fears towards this existence?

—"Yes, of course, it's an odd existence, really strange, really amazing, the fact is that the fear is in everybody's mind and sometimes you're afraid of the unknown. We've to open our eyes on this kind of people (autistic persons) because maybe they're happy! Who knows? Maybe that kind of people is normal and we aren't normal! Nobody knows!".

Holy Records have used slogans for the announcement of your latest album like"... Enter their own future world. Sup is the band of tomorrow!". Do you corroborate this? Do you consider that Sup has reached innovative spheres? How do you see the new millennium's music?

—"I don't know. Holy Records uses slogans to describe our music, it's up to them to say if one band is futurist or not! We don't care. We are playing the music we like, some says we're futurist because in the beginning of Supuration there were clear vocals in our albums! It was more in death metal bands some industrial influences! I don't think that Sup is the best band in the world. We've just trying to create an original stuff. That's it! I don't know if the new millennium will be a metal millennium. I see it more like electronic stuff (electro metal, Techno cybermetal!)

Both melodious and guttural vocals attain an outstanding contrast. What kind of concrete atmosphere do you pretend with this formula? Is it like the two sides of human condition (Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde)?

—"Yes, you're right, there are 2 persons in the same guy in "Room Seven". The autist is dreaming that he's a doctor, 2 persons, 2 vocals. It's a kind of dialogue between the doctor and the autist (but it's the same guy!). The contrast of the 2 vocals is really important for us! I wouldn't say Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde but the conscious and the real life".

How was the creative process of "Room 7"? Was it a laborious process? Or on the contrary... instantaneous inspiration?

—"An instantaneous inspiration. Sup drummer, Thierry Berger, has been working with autists for 2 years, so he wrote a story for the CD. My brother and I wrote songs this story, the music followed. It was a good inspiration! Really interesting. We are really proud of this story".

I remember hearing comments about Sup's music near to Voivod. Do you see this as compliment? What's the distance between Sup and the Canadian legend?

—"Voivod are really good musicians! Really talented! They had their own style, you can't copy them. It's impossible. Some says we are closer to Voivod because of the vocals on the first CD "The Cube". Now it stays! I don't think that "Room 7" is similar to "Phobos" (new Voivod CD)".

Lyrics are based upon autism. Why this subject?

—"As I told you, Thierry wrote the story because he knows this world very well. We were searching for a new story after the "Anomaly" CD. It was a good idea from Thierry, so we accepted the story!".

Let me express my disagreement for not including them in Spanish language (They were even translated into Polish. Erhhh???). As far as I know, they were supposed to be also printed in my mother tongue but... What happened exactly? Am I malicious to think that this is a result of the famous French hate against everything Spanish and viceversa?

—"No, the fact is that I was waiting for the Spanish translation and I didn't receive it! So, as my mother is Polish, and we needed 7 languages, we translated the lyrics in Polish instead of Spanish, maybe on the next album we'll translate the lyrics in Spanish. It was just a question of time. We hadn't enough time to wait for the Spanish translation".

The band hasn't had the adequate response due to the lack of proper distribution so I imagine this one of the main causes for leaving Pias France, is it correct? Do you think Holy Records will contribute to site the band's name into the international market?

—"It's sure that the distribution is better with Holy than Pias. Pias didn't give a shit with for us! Holy Records is more known in the underground and in many places in the world! It's more specific, that's a thousand times better for Sup. If we had known it before, we would have signed on Holy Rec. earlier!".

What happened with that planned European Tour with Nightfall/Yearning? (Nightfall played only here in Madrid). I was reading something about a special performance...

—"The Tour with Nightfall was good! They played in Madrid alone because Sup & Yearning stopped the Tour in Paris".

You've played with numerous bands (Skyclad, Gorefest, The Gathering, My Dying Bride, Loudblast,... just to name a few). What kind of experiences would you point out of those live-appearances?

—"All live concerts with that kind of bands were really interesting (I've to say hello to Jan from Gorefest). 90% of the bands we played were OK! Some bands are really fuckers!!! But that's life".

"The Cube" (your debut album) is now released again via Holy Records "totally remixed with new sound generation". What are the main differences in this version?

—"The drums are more natural, there are more effects (Reverb/Stelay) on the voice. It sounds less Death Metal than the first mix. It sounds like "Room 7". I mean: It's the same guys who recorded/mixed "Room 7" that re-mixed "The Cube" so... it's normal! Anyway, I like both of the 2 mixes".

You got rid of the –uration in the band's name (1995). Do you want to avoid any misunderstandings? Can Sup be considered an advanced form of Death Metal?

—"I don't know if Sup can be considered now as an advanced form of Death Metal, but we're working in that way so we'll see what will happen in the future!".

SOUNDS FROM THE LAKES

Surprise, surprise; here you've got another Finnish band. I found Tenhi's music an exhilarating experience. Tenhi comprises intimistic sensations into indescribable scenarios. Don't miss the chance to walk through dark and forgotten valleys; its touching melodies of Slavic atmosphere will guide you. The very last copies of "Kertomuksia" demo are still available. What are you waiting for? Prophecy's also offering you their CD-Single and do not forget full-length album. The answers stands by T (Tyko Saariko: Guitar, synth, vocals, effects) and I (Ilka Salminen: Drums, guitars, vocals). Goodnight.

Where does Tenhi derives from? How is it connected with your native land?

Tyko: "Tenhi is a ancient Finnish word meaning a shaman or a witch, but it has more deeper meanings for all of us and they are related to the atmosphere we want to create through music".

It'd be kinda informative to know your motivations to be involved in this endeavour (motivations to start in Tenhi).

T:" Tenhi was founded in the early 1997 by me and Ilkka as a result of a project that I had. The idea was to compose music and write lyrics that deal with the mystical side of the nature and the past and myths of Finland. After playing just for ourselves, and when the musical direction started to shape, we decided call us a band, and made it possible for others to hear our music as well.".

Is Tenhi more than a merely consequence of your musical "restlessness"? Definitely a personal philosophy?

Ilkka: "Let's say it's a part of our philosophy that we want to share with listeners. There has to be a great deal of musical restlessness involved, but that's not all. I think mental creativity is at least as important as the musical side".

The band's concept is clearly based on nature. How are you really devoted? What's the difference of your band and other "nature-bands" of Norway (to put an easy example)?

T:" True, but I still wouldn't label Tenhi as a nature music band. I concern nature in my every day life and would call my way of living ecological (consumption habits etc.). It's hard to say how we differ from the Norwegian nature-bands (you tell me), we all have our cultural backgrounds and opinions, which has effect on everything we do. If you search really devoted nature music don't search among the metal-bands".

Then.. Why do you live in a town like Helsinki? What are the advantage/disadvantage of living there?

.I:" I don't have a massive urge to live in Helsinki eventhough I've lived here all my life but I'm doing fine here so I neither have strong will to move away. There are many advantages and disadvantages. The environment is sometimes very stressing and too hectic but,on the other hand, it can offer you a large variety of different things in quite small area. Nature has a strong symbolic value in our music yet I don't think it demands that we should live in the middle of a forest. (which I don't underestimate at all). And I still have a really nice piece of seashore right by my house".

In which degree Helsinki is consumed by american culture? Does it mantain some own cultural aspects?

I:" Quite much in the same degree as the other Nordic capitals. The old culture isn't that much visible in Helsinki but in some other parts of Finland it's stronger".

What's your position towards modern technoligies?... And related to nature?

T:" I am quite suspicious concerning modern technology. It really disgusts me to see people getting lazier all the time, not seeing any effort to do things on their own but relying on latest technology. However, I can't deny the benefits it has in some of its parts. ".

Do you have antecedents of paying in more traditional metal band? What does metal offer you?

T:" Ilmari and I have metal project band Cwenas which is as metallic as it can get yet sounding very personal. Ilmari also plays drums in Mother depth, which is a very professional doom/gothic act, and they are currently searching for a record contract. Metal-music fits to some emotions, but I have to say I lack interest in the current metal-scene".

Your flyers of "Kertomuksia" demo announces it as"23 minutes of dark, original, intense and tranquil music". Would you outline Tenhi into a revolutionary form of expression? What are the strongest points in "Kertomuksia"?

I:" Maybe revolutionary form of musical expression sounds too lofty, but we definitely want to create something of our own. The strongest point of "Kertomuksia" must be the atmosphere we managed to catch on it. I just simply love it. "Kertomuksia" is also a very honest tape. The music has flown straight from our hearts. There are of course some things that could have been done differently, but they don't bother at all because the whole tape stands as a symbol of our emotions and thoughts from that period of time".

It's kinda relaxing to listen those catching melodies, acoustic moments, tragic keyboards,... How would describe the atmosphere on "Kertomuksia"? Is it something in the same level of Ulver "Kveldsfanger" or Empyrium "Songs of Moors..." (Nature Mysticism)?

T:" On our demo "Kertomuksia" we succeeded to get the right atmosphere we were after, dreamy like sequences and some majestic parts, to put it simple. We have always had difficulties describing our music, so I have to urge you to listen our music and find out what dimensions you can reach with it. In my opinion, both bands you referred has different atmosphere in their music compared to ours, but I can see why you draw the parables".

Why all nature effects between each song? Are they just a complement or an interactive part of your compositions?

T:" They are definitely not just complements. I am not afraid experimenting with strange sounds being added to music. On our next release we will use some nature effects and some strange sounds".

Urmm, the last track "Havvissa Saleisst" sounds quite Black Metallish at the end... What's your relationship with B.M. movement?

I:" You're maybe right and that is one of the parts that could have been done differently. I think none of us has much contact with B.M. movement and it's very amusing when people sometimes mistake Tenhi for Black metal.".

Since your lyrics are in your mother tongue, it'd be mandatory a brief explanation. What's the importance of lyrics in the whole balance?

T:" The lyrics are basically about the memories that past has left behind and about the mystical side of nature., death one theme which can be often related to the lyrics. Sometimes there can be a bigger "theme" behind the lyrics like relationship between man and nature, sometimes the lyrics can deal with very small and simple issue like description of a landscape. I write the lyrics in Finnish and some of them are in a poetic form, so difficulties often occur when translating the lyrics. It is hard to get the English use of words variable because I use many different words to describe the same thing in Finnish, that's why translations aren't always "straight" translations but "living their own life" and being own stories about the same theme as the Finnish ones".

You've signed a contract with Prophecy for three full-lengths. In fact, a CD-Single is already available. How's your relationship with Martin? I mean: Had you been searching for a label with similar views, philosophy,...(without forgetting the economic factor)?

I: "I consider it important to have similar views and philosophy with the label you're working for and this naturally had effect on our search for a label. We met Martin last spring when we signed the contract and he seems to be an honest and reliable man. It is also great that he offers bands full artistic freedom concerning their material which many of the bigger labels don't grant for their bands. For example I've heard that Nuclear Blast has strict control on their bands and the way they sounds. When it comes to the economic factor... the contract is good, but how profitable it is for us depends of course on how much records we will sell.

The two songs included on this CD-Single are certainly even more tranquil, dreamy,...Since music is supposed to mean evolution. What's the development in this creation (compared with older material)?

I:" Well, I'm not even sure if the new ones are more tranquil and dreamy than the older ones. I see development in all areas. The song structures are better, we're playing our instruments better and the sounds are better, but, in my opinion, we didn't manage to catch enough atmosphere on the CDs. Particularly the second song "Hiljaiseksi lampi jää" sounds quite dry, but all this is due to the short recording time we had".

There were only two member in the demo era. You have expanded Tenhi with new members and instruments so tell us about these changes. Do new musicians have an active participation (composing, arranging,...)?

T: "We have two new members: Ilmari, who plays bass on our CD-single "Hallavedet" but in the future releases he will also play piano, guitar maybe some synth parts and some percussions, also his vocals might be heard in the coming releases. Other new member Eleonora plays violin and we might hear her sing as well. We will add couple new instruments to our music, I will play didgeridoo, I really enjoy that low woody like sound, and mouthharp. Self-made nature scale flute might be used in some parts to create mystic effects. On our full length album, which will be recorded this autumn, some songs are composed by Ilmari and he has taken part in arranging as well, we are quite open-minded if someone has good idea".

What can you anticipate of your first album? How's the music going to evolve? Will there be more place for experimentation?

I: "We're going to record over 70 minutes of music and then form a wholeness from the best songs. There aren't any special changes in the style, the material is utterly versatile, partly plain and partly more complex, atmospheric and of course good! We'll be experimenting with some new instruments as well and maybe have a couple more "jamming" songs. All in all, if everything goes fine it's going to be something special...".

FUCKED UP BY POLISH POST?

As some of you already know, Hefeystos released their second album "Psycho Café". Guitarist and composer Krzysztof Czop sent me a promo-stuff of his most recent creation. He was very enthusiastic regarding the Exstinctio Sensus era (which included a short interview with Hefeystos). My plans were to do a more complete interview this time, covering aspects of "Vilce Sjen", "Hefeystos" and "Psycho Café". Of course, he kindly would agree to answer my questions, but "incredibly" I haven't heard of him since then. In fact, I've written him a couple of times in order to see what happens but silence was the single reply. Is it another joke of the reputed Polish service? Did he got offended by my sharp words of "Psycho Café"? Another unanswered interview for my collection...

*Hefeystos might be considered an unpredictable band when it comes to its personality. Each release has the ability to transmit diametrical sensations. Try to give us a global analysis of the different moods created on "Vilce Sjen", "Hefeystos", and "Psycho Café". How do you see this drastical change?

* Do you see this drastical change as a progression in your career? In a way... Doesn't it seem that there's a dose of insecurity in the band? Or maybe... Do you want to distance from those bands sounding exactly the same album after album?.

* You had some problems with Wounded Love for the release of the MCD and your debut album was released by Atratus Music (distributed by Last Epitaph) but your second album is released by Avantgarde / Wounded Love Records. Why have you finally chosen this Italian label again what can they guarantee you?.

*What can you say about those conversations with Last Epitaph last summer in Germany? Don't you believe in Germanic efficiency?.

*After a lot of changes in the line-up... this new one seems to be the ultimate. What kind of "virtues" should a man/woman have to be part of Hefeystos?.

*Piotr Weltrowski and you are mainly responsible for the music... How's the creative process? Is it easy to share ideas,...? How important is the band for Piotr? (I mean: He has his own band called December's Fire).

*What do you remember of "Vilce Sjen" MCD? What does it represent?.

*Why all those swords on the photo-sessions of "Vilce Sjen"? What is the meaning of this paraphernalia...?.

*You once stated: "...We haven't played any gigs. Maybe we will do it in the future, but only in closed places and only for the true pagan brothers. No stupid moshing audience... "Do you nowadays corroborate all these Words? Who are those true pagan brothers with the privilege to witness alive-appearance of yours? How would you distinguish a true brother of a fake one?.

*Don't you think that the music on "Psycho Café" fits perfectly for an amusing metal night? Rock Stars never cared about trendy audience...

*"Hefeystos" (debut album) exudes a melancholic atmosphere that very few band have been able to express in this personal form. What were the sources of inspiration to crate such touchy melodies? Was it definitely like a mystical experience?.

*Some people compared "Hefeystos" and Decoryah. Your impressions, please... Would you put Hefeystos at he same level of Finnish monsters? What's your view on "Fall Dark-Waters"?

*Do you consider that negative music has more depth..? Or on the contrary... Is "Psycho Café" the form to radiate your positive feelings?

*You touched my emotions with "Glos Z Ogrodón Niny" (taken form "Hefeystos"), what are your feelings towards this particular song? What did you want to transmit then?

*The lyrics were written in your mother tongue. Since I'm not the only one having problems in the comprehension of your native language... What do they deal with? Are they based on a specific concept? Are you totally identified with the whole lyrical work? (I mean: Nantur Aldaron wrote most of them).

*The tracks included on "Psycho Café" have got almost nothing in common with previous stuff: Rockish and some touches here and there of "Gothic" Metal wave... Why this change? Which were your motivations to conceive an album in such straight way?

*I don't agree at all with some of your comments in the presentation of "Psycho Café":"... new tracks are completely different from old ones, I hope that is positive. They are a little bit harder, aggressive, less melancholic and what is most important, more varied, so the whole is not so boring as "Hefeystos". Do you really think that aggressive music is synonymous of variety? Perhaps... Is "Hefeystos" an apathetic album? Your arguments, please.

*The female vocal lacks of the sweetness that once had... In what ways has the new style affected to Alicia´s voice? Has feminine´s spirit a different meaning in this release? A more "perverse" approach?

The lyrics that I've read contain steady references of sex doesn't it seem like and obsession? What does "Thursday evening" represent? A degradation of feminine condition?

*We can hear Aliester Crowley´s voice as an intro to the album. Since he became rather cliché in the "scene"...What do you find fascinating of him?.

*What can your say of the chaotic atmosphere in the last track ("Psycho café")? Are your the champions? Of what????.

*What should we expect of Hefeystos in the new millennium? What kind of new "surprises"...?

*Have these questions been a fist on your face? Feel free to clarify something in the end.

OPEN THE ARK OF YOUR FEARS

Deinonychus has been more or less in oblivion and it didn't get the deserved recognition (Does Marco really need it?). Only destiny knows... but suddenly "Ark of Thought" third album appeared like a ghost of your worst nightmares. It represents the reincarnation of a tormented soul. You're haunted by cataleptic melodies, Mr. Kehren's yelps,... and Kaboomm!, you'll be deep into the abyss. "A.O.T." can't be considered an easy album. You'll be able to access to this introspective release only drop by drop. New opus is going to be assembled and " the material is more aggressive and straight forward as "Ark of Thought". By the way, the German band Bethlehem used Marco's vocal abilities for their third album (Your voice has no limits!!!). I prompt you to buy "Sardomscher Untergang im Zeichen irreligiöser Darbietung" and... have a nice day. This interview proves that Marco Kehren is a really straight forward person in all his actions. Perhaps he's standing alone with his give visions. Notice the fact that some answering parts became quite "harsh" towards the given subject. This is exactly my given mission, so let me say that I'm quite glad to see that that I haven't failed this time. Prepare for a long walk...

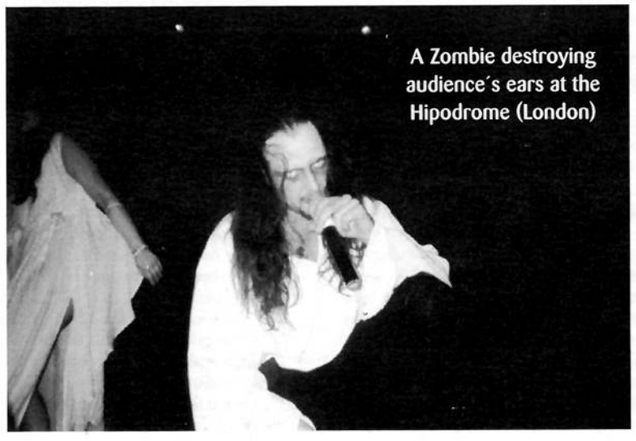
Why did you quit co-operating with Nihil (Cacophonous Records)? Do you have now better conditions through Supernal Music?

—"Oh well, I guess the same story old story as many other have told before. Cacophonous Records somehow didn't find it necessary to promote my albums well; in order to push the sales. So it's obvious that my albums (in special the 2nd one) didn't get the attention it deserved, and therefore to drown in the fast expanding CD-market. They're reason to cut on Deinonychus' promotional budget, was part reason of the fact they lost a huge number on money, in order to pay for the incredible high studio-budget for Cradle of Filth's never released original version from "Dusk and her embrace"-album!, which I probably never will find out. They did cut on my studio-budget for the 2nd album as well, which was quite frustrating. As you know, I play except from the keyboards all instruments myself, so this means that I need a reasonable recording time in the studio in order to record a decent executed album. So obviously enough my 2nd album was too ill executed for my liking. Other events occurred the split between Deinonychus and Cacophonus Records where the famous payments of royalties. I guess I don't need to explain what happened with them ehh???!!!. Besides, I like to tell you that Nihil has been removed from the front of in Cacophonous Records ranks a long time ago, today he's just the butler in Cacophonous only because of his incompetence as a business-man!!! About Supernal Music my new label... I guess I've hit the bulls eye with them! Since my participation on the mentioned label, everything is going up hill. The contract is very good, promotion is very good, and most important... me and Alex (the man behind Supernal) have a really professional relationship according the band and label's interest! No... so far I just can praise Alex for his work for Deinonychus he has done so far, not to mention that Cacophonous failed to mange putting in perhaps one quarter of Alex's efforts in almost four years! That must make you think, or not!!??".

A promo-CD of "Ark of thought" arrived into my mail-box plus a biography where the term "Gothic" is used a couple of times. Do you personally find bonds of union between the so called Gothic movement and Deinonychus?

—"I started to use the banner gothic in relation with doom, etc, since my second album "The Weeping of a Thousand Years", as there were obvious moments of gothic underlined in my music, and perhaps for an even more relevant part in image. However, I guess I have to be careful with using the term gothic, as loads of people easily can misunderstand your music for bands such as Sisters of Mercy ; and Deinonychus definitely is heading miles away from their slick-goth tunes! The link between Deinonychus and the so called Gothic movement more or less lies therein that I more or less can relate to the lifestyle gothic has provided us with, nothing more... nothing less! From a musical point of view I consider my new album "Ark of Thought" has been removed an obvious amount of miles away from gothic, although there can be found minor details or gothic influences. But overall the album has gained a lot more aggression and heaviness since "The Weeping of Thousand Years"-album, and I assure you that the future will bring even more of that!...".

Your music roots are dealed with Malefic Oath. Looking back on it... What'd be your conclusion of that period?



A Zombie destroying audience´s ears at the Hipodrome (London)

—"Malefic Oath today even mean a great deal to me. I'm still into the only recorded demo "The land where evil dwells" from 1992. In Malefic Oath I learned to expand my skills in playing several instruments –as we never could rely on Sephiroth who did or let's say tried to play the drums in the band; on our rehearsals I always had to change from bass/vocals to drums and the other way round. However from the point where rising some internal problems with me and the others in the band, I decided to start my own band, and not only because of that minor problem. I felt restricted in exploring my talent as a musician. However... with my reasonable skills on drums/bass and guitar and vocals, it was more than obvious for me to start an one-man band known as Deinonychus! Whenever I look back at my participation in Malefic Oath; I feel like having learned a lot from that experience. To me it was the ultimate decision becoming an ambitious musician. And if I remember the skills I had in 1992, and see to what I'm able now... I have become a very mature musician in these days".

Are you interested in different types of artistic expression? Which are the most talented humanoids whose work you find admirable?

—"Definitely I'm interested in more than just one aspect of art. Every form of art should be seen as a medium towards your imagination. And whenever art has been created that good in order to leave any impression it succeeds in being a good piece of art, when I'm talking about art-expressions in music, writing, movie, painting or whatever, it doesn't matter. I really can't give you an answer on who's being the most talented artist in my opinion. To me the most relevant point in art is that impress me, and not just from seeing or hearing it, it has to leave an impression in my heart. Relating to that; even a lesser talented artist can impress me a lot with his or her works!!!".

Guttural Records had re-pressed "After the rain falls... an empty sky remains" demo on MCD. Still identified with the entire concept? What did you pretend to express through your first and only demo?

—"Oh yes... I still can identify myself with my demo, and that should be obvious; since Deinonychus deals with parts of my being. Although the fundamental concept can't be seen representative anymore in Deinonychus, it's more than likely that people evolve in gaining knowledge and life-experience and therein become more mature. That means that normally you should grow more sophisticated as well, unfortunately this doesn't count for everyone; especially for those who are born to live their lifes by the opinions of others!!! Since I'm a natural born individualist, I don't spend any time worrying about this. So... my level of sophistication now, of course has grown miles ahead from that one back in the days I recorded my demo. According to that, it's obvious that my concept back in that time can't be hold up to the level of sophistication I possess in these days. To be honest... back in those days every band tended to blow up their image; in order to hide their lack of musical talent... all the bands were yelling to be the most brutal band in the earth, and pretending to be Yngwie Malmsteen's of black metal. Well you can imagine that someone blessed with a decent working brain like I have... pretty fast got fed up with this childish behaviour. Anyway,...as I started Deinonychus, loads of people just had a good laugh about my intentions to running this band on my own. However... during the process of my demo-recordings I lacked all moral interest in playing straight-forward an thigh, therefore I concentrated (more than any other demo-band in the same period) in creating a most extreme atmosphere in my demo. In order to achieve that I even to tune my guitar, and there you go... improvising all drums and vocal parts, finishing the recordings without even showing any interest in having the songs going through a final mix, not to mention any rough mix. My first and only demo got celebrated as one of the sickest and most brutal demos recorded in 1993: Of course I'm picking up here the opinions from all the criticals who reviewed this demo back then. So... in order to give a hitting the point answer to your question... I just wanted to express true violence without yelling it from the rooftop's on forehand. And that I succeed in my intention, shows the obvious decision from Guttural Records from Mexico who pressed this demo on CD in the middle of 1997, in order to satisfy the hunger from all those people who still were begging desperately in order to obtain a copy! Unfortunately there are just a few copies from this hand-numbered in 1000 copies limited CD left...".

Would it be erroneous to describe Deinonychus as a personal challenge? Doesn't it seem something like you are "fearful" to blend different personalities?

—"If I wouldn't know any better, I would take the first half of your question as an insult towards my being. Deinonychus definitely hasn't anything to do with a personal challenge; even when I consider to think for a second about this subject... Where the hell I should go for then??? I don't feel like working my ass off in order to gain any respect or even get a shoulder clap from someone who can appreciate my efforts in Deinonychus!!! Deinonychus is a part of my being as well part of my ideology. Now you definitely can see that something like a personal challenge is irrelevant in Deinonychus. About your challenge point... If you would consider a personal challenge in order to get accepted or even gain any respect. I would find this very humiliating, therein that you gain respect in being what you are, and act mature towards those opponents who might deserve it, and not by serving the world blind towards your own destruction at the end. However... I don't see the point being in competition with myself, in order to that I praise myself for every day I gain more knowledge and become more mature about everything I want to achieve. No... I'm not obsessed with fear when considering to involve more members in Deinonychus in order to complete a line-up. If you would have taken your time to find out more about Deinonychus, you should have known that Deinonychus is part of my personal being and ideology of life. Therefore the essence to involve other musicians into Deinonychus seems to be irrelevant. Although I don't find your question irrelevant, relating to the point where I perhaps sometimes would decide to have session-musicians for playing live, wouldn't scare me off. Nevertheless I already have managed to play live all on my own... but I'll coming back to that later on. Although I used Sephiroth from Occult as a session-vocalist on my demo and first album (we shared the vocals together!), and a keyboard player named John Bartels who's age is somewhere in the forties! However, it is of great importance to mention that John Bartels also produced and engineered all Deinonychus releases so far. In all those years we work together now, he surely brought in a piece of own effort in order to develop Deinonychus' sound from release to release. However... Since the release of my second album, Deinonychus expresses more of its concept and ideology than ever before. Therefore I can say that for example Sephiroth who did some session-vocals on both my demo and 1st album never had any effect on Deinonychus's sound, left to mind me saying that I never gave him the opportunity to do so. John Bartels helped me in evolve Deinonychus' sound on CD through the years, therefore except from the sound, John also hadn't any relevant effect on Deinonychus' music. In relation to his keyboard accompaniment... he did play exactly that what I played for him on forehand on guitars. Nevertheless... if someone could call himself a member in Deinonychus, I guess I should give him the credits for it!!! Anyway, to be honest... which musician is willing to getting told what to play? Every halfway mature musician would leave right away. And that would be the case when involve more musicians to Deinonychus. Unless you are one of those I-do-everything-as-long-as-I-can-play-in-your-band musician. However... such persons are doomed to fail anyway..."

> "Deinonychus can´t be considered as a form of self-therapy for my being as well. The negative and sad experiences I capture in my music, to me... reveal a reverse affection whenever listen to it, and therefore works therapeutic; as I gain a lot of strength and selfconfidence by listening to my own works, as well it helps either in solving or learning to live with certain problems, etc".

May you consider "The Silence of December" as still representative of Deinonychus' personality? I think that the raw stuff contained on your debut full-length was a self "barrier" impending an appropriate conception of "naked" manifestations...

—"Oh well... "The Silence of December" still contains songs which never leave my heart, and still can be seen as part of my personality. Such as "Red is my blood... Cold is my heart" and "Under the autumn Tree" however... a song like the "The final affliction of Xafan" for example, I definitely count to one of my all-time fave Deinonychus songs I ever wrote, irrelevant to say of course things could have been done better by now, that tends to happen always, and will never change!!! But it's a fact that this song never can become too personal for me. Oh well... maybe from a musical point of view, but the lyric in that song was written by Satan Gestapo from Stregoica mag from France. It's a brilliant piece of art he has written there, but the ideology behind the lyric isn't of any relevance in my life; nor I believe in the proclaimed message the lyric beholds!!! From a musical point of view... "The Silence of December" has lost 50% from the personality it possessed; due to the fact that now three years later after the recordings I have become a more mature musician, and therefore I just can't just desperately blowing up my performance on this album, as I have become a far out better musician in these days relating to my debut album. Nevertheless... If I would remix some of the songs, I would definitely choose for the above mentioned songs, mentioning that if I would re-record them. I probably would end up playing them exactly the same. I guess you get my point here eh??!! Sorry but I don't really get your point in the second part of your question. But don't worry... that happens sometimes ha ha!".

Explain us the obvious development Deinonychus "suffered" from "The Silence of December" until the most recent "Ark of

Thought" third album. Have you recently got any fierce critics?

—"On forehand I like to mention that Deinonychus didn't suffer in order to evolve... but gained whatever development in order to evolve! To me the most obvious development in order to see the huge difference between "The Silence of December", "The Weeping of Thousand Years" and the recently released third full-length "Ark of Thought"... definitely would be the execution in performance and huge progression in sound-quality; apart from that; "Ark of Thought" definitely is the first of three albums, who contains real thigh executed songs, the way it should be... Due these criteria's "Ark of Thought" definitely can be seen as a high-profile album!!! Any fierce critics!!!... All you people out there really are allowed to learn to know me better. I'm not the kind of person who's afraid to judge on his own releases, just because of the fact that now someone won't buy any of my albums due I said something negative about it!!! Those who actually wouldn't buy any because of the above mentioned... really have my blessings! To me it's obvious that again I see my point confirmed... as I said in question nr. 5; you always will have these kind of people who are born to live their lifes by the opinions of others, and in order to that... others will decide for those people; whether what is good or not!!! Oh well... I rather excuse myself for selling less due such people, than feeling "flattered" due the fact that someone incompetent according such behaviour would praise my works... however such being never would have demanded capacity of brains in order to have a clue what Deinonychus is about! It sounds quite harsh what I'm saying here, but it is the bitter truth and real life reality!!! Well, it should be more than obvious to you that I won't answer to this part of the question, if you don't agree; than unfortunately you can praise yourself "lucky" being not that different from those kind of beings I dismembered above! Why? Well... If you don't agree, you haven't understood anything from what I have answered so far to this question, or you haven't read yet... make your decisions fast!!! Not such a long time ago I spoke about people to take their own responsibility and realising the effort to judge for themselves and making their own well considered opinions on any subject or whatever. In order to become more mature-self confident-individual-sophisticated in life. And now in other words... If I would criticise my own albums overhear... I would assume that all your readers are undeveloped; and blessed with brain size of an ant!!! Well, I do not take the responsibility for that, as I want to achieve the opposite!!! Those who want to find any point of critic in my works should consider a proper listen to it without prejudice-tendencies and judge for YOURSELF! For god's sake... I'm not their mother who has to teach them or imitating all for them with a wooden spoon! Oh well Raúl,... you gave me a hard time answering this "at first sight" easily answering part of this question!... However, I enjoyed it!!??".

To tell you the truth, I haven't heard anything of your second album ("The Weeping of Thousand Years"). According to a press-sheet, it's " a concept album which evidences an unusual degree of sophistication as well as a pronunciated development... awash with symphonic arrangements, impassionate (but very extreme) vocals, and drowning melodies of mesmerising sadness". What are your personal sensations for "The Weeping of a Thousand Years"?

"Therefore I also find those so called satanic-warrior-black-metal bands; who claim to fight cristianity through their written lyrics more than an embarrasing evidence for the fact that some idiot must have been given these people even the right to exist next to me!!!".

—"The Weeping of a Thousand Years" was composed during a period where I should avoid any suggestions in order to relate myself with a person who claims to be the happiest person in the earth! As I was not due to my private struggles and problems, etc, I started to compose songs for the "Weeping..." album, in order to "heal" myself from all my problems, struggles, etc. Deinonychus can't be considered as a form of self-therapy for my being as well. The negative and sad experiences I capture in my music to me reveal a reverse affection whenever listen to it, and therefore works therapeutic; as I gain a lot of strength and self-confidence by listening to my own works, as well it helps me either in solving or learning to live with certain problems, etc. Nevertheless "The Weeping of Thousand Years" to me represents something monumental in my life. From the first day on; Where I started to create my first ideas and concept for this album, towards that very day I finally got the final result in my hand; in format of a CD!!! Which took 13 months from that very start to that very end!!! I went through a lot of shit and problems I had to cope with. This album has manage to temper or solve all my problems I did cope with at that time. By listening to the final product over and over again; feeling proud at what you achieved.. I started to dwell deep inside, in order to seek solutions to my problems or questions : However, if I would listen to "The Weeping..." at this very moment, I would feel a sort of strength coming up, just because of the fact you coped with your problems, back then the album was an even greater importance! From a musical point of view, I feel really confident about the fact that my intentional efforts-in order to create those atmospheres together with the intentional kind of sombreness and frustration... did work out very successfully, as the album did leave you with a quite desperate impression, and that's one of the main goals I had in mind considering the fact that I wanted to create an almost living atmosphere in the album! My fave songs are "The Romantic sounds of Death", "A gathering of Memories" and "The Gothic Statue"...".

How do you see the social evolution along this agonising century? Which important values have been lost thanks to the human degradation?

—"It's obvious that I'm not blind, and definitely I'm showing interest and put in effort as well; in order to obtain knowledge about our evolution in technology, science and other rapid developing subjects our generation is "granted" with. However... If I would consider approaching these developments as problems I should worry about; I might be ending up writing triple-CD releases at once, in order to cope with all these, ha! You can't deny that our evolution in becoming high-intelligent beings provided by all different kinds of comfort, definitely let's us benefit from all the advantages, technology has given us. Otherwise I would end up writing this interview with a regular pencil, and would have to walk this interview to the mail-box, instead of using my car! From a social point of view, it's more and more obvious; we heading to a very violent and selfish society. However... I'm coping with that topic, due trying to be independent and stronger than my opponent. Given this situation, I don't to bother about others, or even should so. On the other hand I can share my energy and effort with people who deserve my respect, friendship, love or whatever!!! Hmmm... Which essential values have been lost regarding the pattern of behaviour the human "developed"? I guess I can ask this question also in this kind of pattern. Anyway... the most valuable forms we have lost regarding our behaviour towards other humans, or whatever else?!? In my opinion would be the valuable gesture of showing respect to those who deserve it and the ability to live together in harmony. Somehow I think we have forgotten about our behaviour,, since there isn't anything left like decent morality!!! Today everybody feels of course more related to a more or less show off appearance in doing everything he or she wants, on matter if it is morally justified! However... I hope I got the clue in your second part of this question. If not, and you are referring to material values of essence... I just can say... I don't care quite much! No one can turn back time in any chosen part of our history. For example the ruins from medieval times that still witness the earth... It's great to experience them considering they existing for such a long time. But to say it nice and cruel at once.. We have to turn our faces towards the future and face our destiny!!! Because of our selfishness and lack in giving eachother a helping hand by solving any problems. We always human put our head in the sand and keep complaining how good the times where years ago. However, keeping up this

behaviour... it should not surprise anyone that our social environment will degrade to such a level sooner or later, that we perhaps aren't even allowed to breath anymore eh??!!".

A noteworthy fact is your participation on "Vampiria: The Dracula Centenary Celebrations" alongside famous personalities such as Veronica Carson, Caroline Munro, Ingrid Pitt amongst others. I guess a part of my potential readers would like to know some details of it.

—"Well, Vampiria was an event held in London in order to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Bram Stocker's Dracula novel. And to celebrate this all, all sort of artists, authors, performers related on one way or the other with the vampire-culture, were invited to present a performing bill to dress up the event with. Well oh well, my humble appearance was requested as well ha! I've got contacted 4 months before the event with the proposal to give my worldwide-live debut vocal-performance, in front of 1200 gathered audience! Well my first reaction to this proposal of course was to had a good laugh. I never experienced an one-man band life-performance before, yet thought that it was an impossible venture!! Since the organising party insisted to have me on the bill, they came up with this grand idea, performing along with the music guiding me on DAT-tapes and being backed up by some girls representing "The Brides of Dracula" in order to give away a vampyric theatre-performance alongside my performance. And so it was done... Deinonychus was destined to be the most extreme act on the bill, alongside less relevant appearances from one rock band and pagan/rock band called Inkubus Skkubus from the UK. The event took off at 4.00 PM and did last for another 7 hours. I was destined to be co-headlining this event, which of course was an enormous honour considering the fact that for example bands like Cradle of Filth weren't asked to appear. As the organising party considered Deinonychus the most convincing vampyric luminaries alongside the extreme metal sector. However, I would lie by saying that I felt comfortable by the rank given me in appearance in whole my life, not to forget that I couldn't rehearse any stage-performance nor benefit from a decent soundcheck. I felt obviously uncomfortable, as well by the given situation to play in from of a 1200 mainstream goth-vampyre audience. But at last but not least I did benefit from my experience and ambition in order to improvise my stage-performance at the spot. Surprisely enough, the response from that same audience was very positive. I got wonderful feedback from several people coming from several different music/theatre etc scenes. Even Veronica Carlson who appears to be at the age of late 50ties came to congratulate me after my show. Quite stunning... according the fact that this woman has played Maria in the Hammer-horror Dracula movie "Dracula has risen from the grave" with Christopher Lee in 1972. However to please you with more details on this event, I guess you had to be coming forward in giving all the space your mag would have without any interview in it. Given the fact that this event did include 7 hours of entertainment relating to all sort of aspects related to the vampire-cult!!! Never I will forget the experience of having been part of this all!!! Since Deinonychus can be considered as an underground band, it's just so amazing that I had the chance to participate in Europe's biggest vampire event held!!! And not to forget the given fact that I was the only performance presenting the vampire concept through bombarding the audience with an extreme and sophisticated flavour of extreme metal, the way only Deinonychus can bring it...".

"To me it´s obvious that again my point is confirmed... you always will have these kind of people who are born to live their lifes by the opinions of others, and in order to that... others will decide for those people; wheter what is good or not!".

"...On the other hand, I can share my energy and effort with people who deserve my respect, love or whatever!"

I'd point out your vocal abilities (screams of agony and despair) : A really strong point of "Ark of Thought" CD. Isn't it something like a trademark? Have musical side been created with the intention of complementing a prior factor (vocal lines)?

—"Definitely my vocals stand as a trademark for Deinonychus! So far everybody has said that my vocals are not comparable to others, and besides that... sound original and very suitable for the sort emotions I want to achieve by using them. Somehow I don't get the clue in your second half question. Anyway, I'll try to make the best out of it! My vocals are totally improvised on every recording I have done so far. It's totally irrelevant for me to rehearse vocals, in order to achieve the best and most convincing atmosphere by using them. There's no second band who sounds that convincing and true form the heart like Deinonychus (as far as I know). Rehearsed vocals sound "rehearsed" as well in recording... like most of the vocalists do not even take the effort being a bit creative in structuring their vocal lines along with the music. Given that aspect... a lot of vocalists just choose for the easy way, by following the melody or rhythm parts of a song, almost identically the same with the guitar riffs. However, another part given that I don't rehearse vocals is because I use different tuned vocals in my technique as well screams, etc all in order to make them sound as desperate as possible and to keep it varied. Left to mention that when I'm about to record my vocals for a song, I analyse the concept and ventures happening in the particular lyric. Benefit from this fact, I can give my vocal sound more edge in phrases who ask for a dramatic sound in my vocals".

"Ark of Thought" consists of suggestive titles such as "Chrysantemus in Bloom", "Oceans of Soliloquy", "Birth at the eleventh moon", "The fragrant thorns of roses",... Could you write a synthesis of these fragments? How important are lyrics with the music?

—"Luckily enough this time I'm gifted with the amusing fact that this answer won't be as long as the previous ones. Given the fact that "Ark of Thought" deals about one concept, it's obvious all the lyrics are connected in one or other way. The mentioned titles in your question all deal with heartache, frustration, disillusionment, etc. The only exception on the rule perhaps is the song "Birth at the eleventh moon". Since this song happens to be an instrumental song there's no explanation available for a lyric. However... "Birth at the eleventh moon" suggests to the world of Astrology, and more accurate to the being representing Deinonychus, namely ME myself! This song is a sort of symbolised piece of art, brought to life for the reason of expressing whole my life in nothing more than notes and some baby-cry samples, which provide the birth-aspect in this song! To explain the title in its full extent, I would say that "Birth at the eleventh moon" is a more or less metaphor, which reflects my birth and life under the sign of the Scorpio as I have been born in November (the eleventh moon). In fact is the music recorded in a CD more important than the lyrics who are being a part of each song. But from a rational point of view it's in fact pathetic to say that lyrics are more important. Since most of the time it obvious that you can't hear any decent word performed from a vocalist, representing the more extreme metal music orientated territory, since this is just part of this "culture" ; I'm the last one complaining... since my vocals not always or perhaps often don't allow me to sing very accurate and clear vocal-lines, from which the lyric definitely would benefit if I would do so. However it happens not to be like that! Like I said the music is more important in context to the lyrics, as nobody is gonna buy a CD without music and still included lyric. I guess a book would be far out recommendable over the latter! However in my opinion it is important to have no contrast in context the lyrics related to with the music. How often we experienced these quarrels between rivalling death metal bands accusing eachother in using social-political thematic in their lyrics.. Even though I even don't mind what people are writing in their lyrics... since words alone never will change any situation in order to progress. Therefore I also find those so called satanic-warrior- black metal, who claim to fight christianity

through their written lyrics more than an embarrassing evidence for the fact that some idiot must have been given these people even the right to exit next to me!!! I guess the more undeveloped species calling themselves black metal warriors must feel comfortable by the fact that they fight their worst enemy by words and not by physical strength as using fist, etc. Or even take the opportunity to use any weapon... but since the brain of an ant can't collect that much information all at once. I wouldn't be surprised by the fact that those evil warriors, perhaps are not even in the possible situation in order to handle a weapon; as by looking for example at a gun, their brain has already absorbed more information than the size of their brain is capable to place in any form of realising actions. According that given fact... stick to your all and everything destroying-propaganda lyrics to conquer the world with eh guys??!!?? Well, back to the issue... Lyrics become important if they carry or even better... are the visual realisation of expressions the music should express! In Deinonychus the lyrics are of major importance in context to the music. Both mediums are destined to be one. As my music and lyrics together realise the atmosphere requested in a particular song! Beside of that my lyrics are the only way for me, dealing with my problems etc in reading them, I can store all information inside me, and work it out! As I said on the very beginning of this interview... Deinonychus happens to be more than just a band... it happens to be a part of my being and my ideology. Therefore in my case... lyrics and music carry the same weight in value...".

How would be the perfect form to end your own existence? Has Death become an obsession?

—"Live my life that way I long for... getting old and older and then... Well, at the age of 90 a young long-legged nurse with angelic appearance at the end of 20 will help me out of my misery. Is that alright with you??!! Huh!!?? No... Are you kidding? Death never had such an impact on me. To call it an obsession is truly ludricous. You better ask those terribly deformed legions of nurts; calling themselves the eliterian force; obsessed with the fantastic claim to kill christ one day while having his lunch in the nearest Burger King. Oh well... What can I say? Since I truly believe in the reincarnation dogma, death is no longer a relevant issue, though my interest in death related or in context with other interesting thematic as religion, still has my attention. The way ancient religions did cope with the fear of dying or being prepared to undertake a spiritual journey after they were ceased. Now that sounds halfway interesting, doesn't it?

Any conclusions? Your time is much appreciated.

—"Well Raúl, I have to admit that this must have been the longest interview I did for Deinonychus during the last five years. By that given fact... praise yourself for your most interesting and in-depth questions. I wish you all the best with Inner Essence in the future. To those who count themselves as being a mature develop being with an acceptable level of sophistication; and long for any deeper analysing deep inside the aspect of human emotions, I suggest to check out Deinonychus "Ark of Thought"... unless you can't deal with a great deal of sophisticated and extreme form of metal art! However.. take care, all you people out there... and stay who you are, unless you are still in the process of exploration...".

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THE PAST IS ALIVE

I remember to have been in the Pirenees when I was a child (the Spanish part). I haven't forgotten those excursions, burnt meat, ... We also crossed to the French correspondence because my grandma wanted to visit Lourdes and praise... Ahhh, innocent recollections!!! Years passed and one day I saw somewhere else the address of a band from Lourdes that automatically awoke my curiosity. Stille Volk doesn't cause indifference, that's for sure. Their music will make you dream about ancient places, horrifying personages, ... or they will simply provoke a big smile on you. Stille Volk won't be remembered like just another band (no matter if you like it or not); the best epitaph for a band destined to perish. Roques (a rural inhabitant of the Pirenees) was the responsible of answering my rural (?) questions. This facet isn't one of his most remarkable virtues (he apologised in a short note: "Sorry for some "fast"answers but I don't like to answer in English. I study History and not English so I'm not really "virtuous"to answer!. After such an exercise of sincerity; What can I add?

You're living in one of the most catholic towns in the world. Do you see evident differences in between Lourdes and other French cities? Has your position turned into more "drastic"through these years (in the case that we can use the word "drastic"when we are speaking about christianity)? To be more precise, you had to adapt yourself to the circustamces... Am I wrong?

—"Sure, there is a lot of differences between Lourdes and other cities. When you visit Lourdes, you've got a lot of impressions, bad or good, but you can't be indifferent. I live in this town since the age of four months so... when I was younger, I was very antichristian because I was really horrified by the way in which religion exploited the human distress. So, it's true that that my position turned into a violent antichristian. But, now, my mind has become indifferent to other people except for my friends and family. I'm structuring my thoughts according to my own experiences".

Campero bueno

What do you remember of those "famous"nuclear-tests? Relating this question with the musical side... What did you think of the boycott to the government of your country by the Norwegian band In the Woods...?

—"I don't care about boycott of bands like In the Woods... or others. I can appreciate their point of view but... I'm not involved in this or something else: I do for only an antifascist position. The nuclear-tests enter in a politic motivation. France needs of express his own strength, power opposite to the world. So, I respect attitude of In the Woods... but it's all".

Since Stille Volk has nothing to do with a traditional Metal band, What about the process of musical compositions? How does a "rehearsal"of yours look like? I'm reading right now that "Hantaoma"performs over 35 instruments and "No fucking keyboards have been used. I reckon that you should tell us a little bit about those instruments included on your debut album. How long you've been familiar with all of them?

—"In the beginning of the band, we didn't think that we could have any success in Metal scene, so we don't have anything to see with Metal even if we have a lot of success. We don't want to be compared with a particular musical scene. We belong to an eclectic musical scene. So we compose according to a specific mode: the ornamental glass. We start from a guiding line and we ornament and improve in order to mix the variety of the timbres like in the Middle Ages. Our quest is to practise with a lot of instruments: ancient music gives a great place to improvisation. So we want to have a lot of instruments to enrich our music: Hurdy-gurdy, violin, percussion, guitars, biniour, bombarde, cromorne, flute, ... We're not against keyboards. We only think it's too easy to practise; there's no enjoyment to imitate sounds with synthetic sounds".

According to Holy Records, they are labelling Stille Volk as "Ancient Pagan Music"but you've stated somewhere ".... We are not pagan people. Do you want to clarify something of this well-known topic? Are you marking the boundaries of your musical style?

—"We've said "we are not pagan people"because we don't want to be assembled to this metal trend of pagan bands. I don't think they understand the "pagan"concept. We don't consider it as a fucking religion but like a real way of life. This is an entire part of our minds. It's public to opposite christianity and paganism. I don't want to enter in this false discussion that doesn't exist except in some people's minds".

What's your personal view of development between the two demos and album? Would you like to "eliminate"something of your previous stuff?

—"I don't want to explain this evolution. This is a natural evolution of our minds. I'm not objective to explain my own spirit. I keep this psycho analysis for myself. It goes hard in hard with personal thinking. I absolutely don't regret although it corresponds to what we wanted to do at this moment".

Stille Volk walks (musically and lyrically) into the History, Myths, ... of your region (South of France). Any particular reason to show the past through your music? Which aspects of your region has a special effect on you?

—"We're not into a "regionalistic"way. We only play tribute to our landscapes. We're fascinated by the elements and their influence in Mythology. We search to understand how people in the past achieved the world, the space and how the tried to give answers to their questions by creating mythology. These landscapes dialogues with us in our minds. We like to imagine these deities and genius".

Your music seems to be accepted by a wide range of musical manifestations (Folk, Gothic, Black, and so on). What are the most acclaimed "points"of Stille Volk? Why do you think that Stille Volk is appreciated by multicolour audience?

—"I think people appreciate our originality and a particular conception of music: We want to be eclectic".

I've received a promotional "poster"of your band where all members are wearing masks. Do they have a certain meaning?... And clothes?

—"These masks consists in a "personification"of Nature spirits but we don't use them on stage".

Your debut CD was supposed to be available through Misanthropy Records though Holy Records finally released it. Will you continue working with them?

—"Holy is the best for us to promote the band especially in France. It's easier to work with them. We don't reproach anything to Misanthropy. For the second CD, We'll keep on working with them".

You're also playing in a Death Metal band called Eviternity. This space can be used to distinguish clearly what you want to express in Stille Volk and Eviternity. By the way, What do you think of actual situation in Death Metal? Has it still got something to offer?

—Stille Volk and Eviternity allow me to express different feelings. I don't know if Death Metal has something to offer. Why not?"